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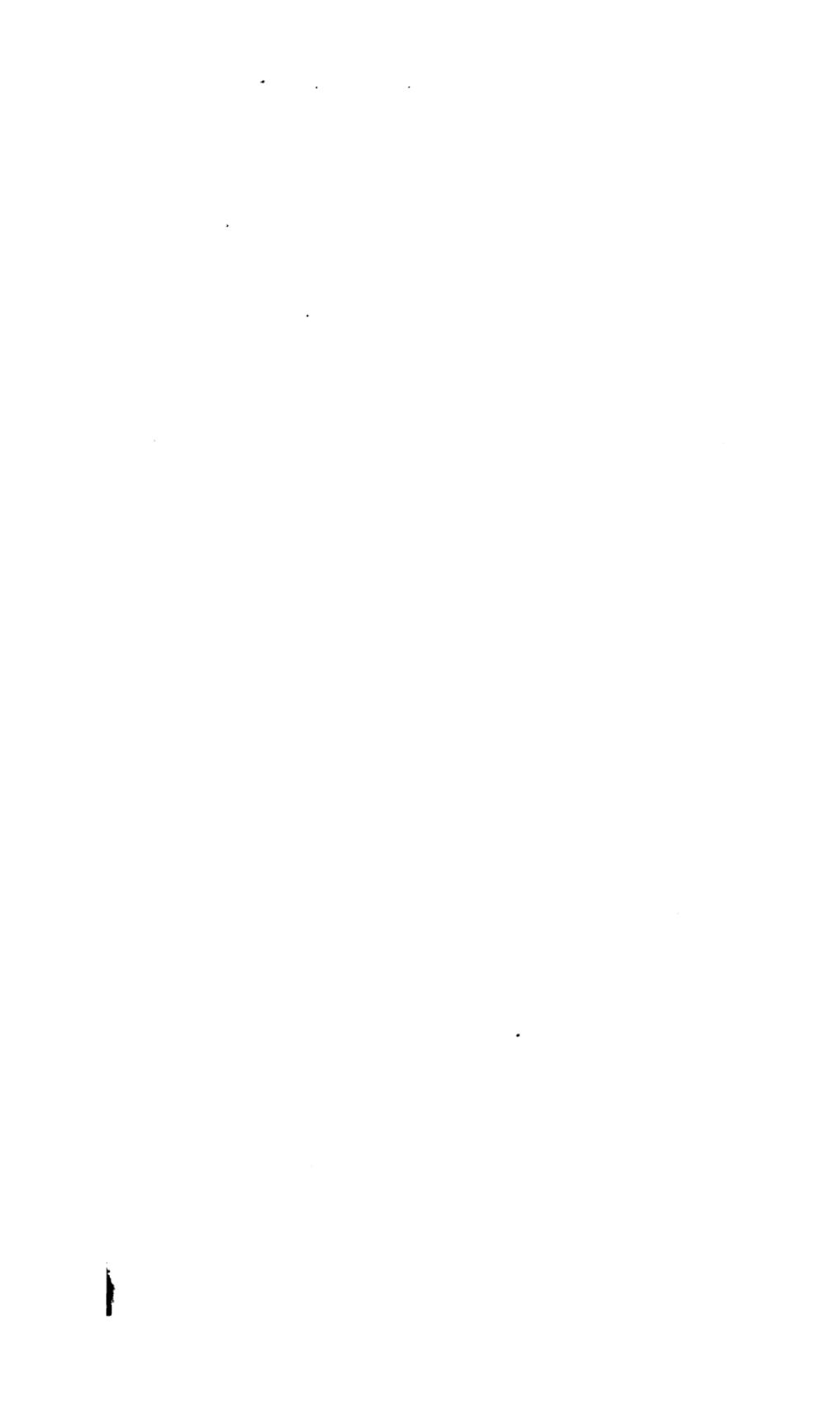
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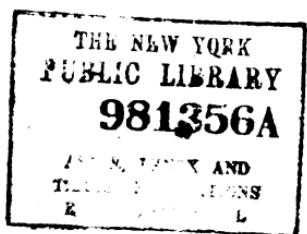
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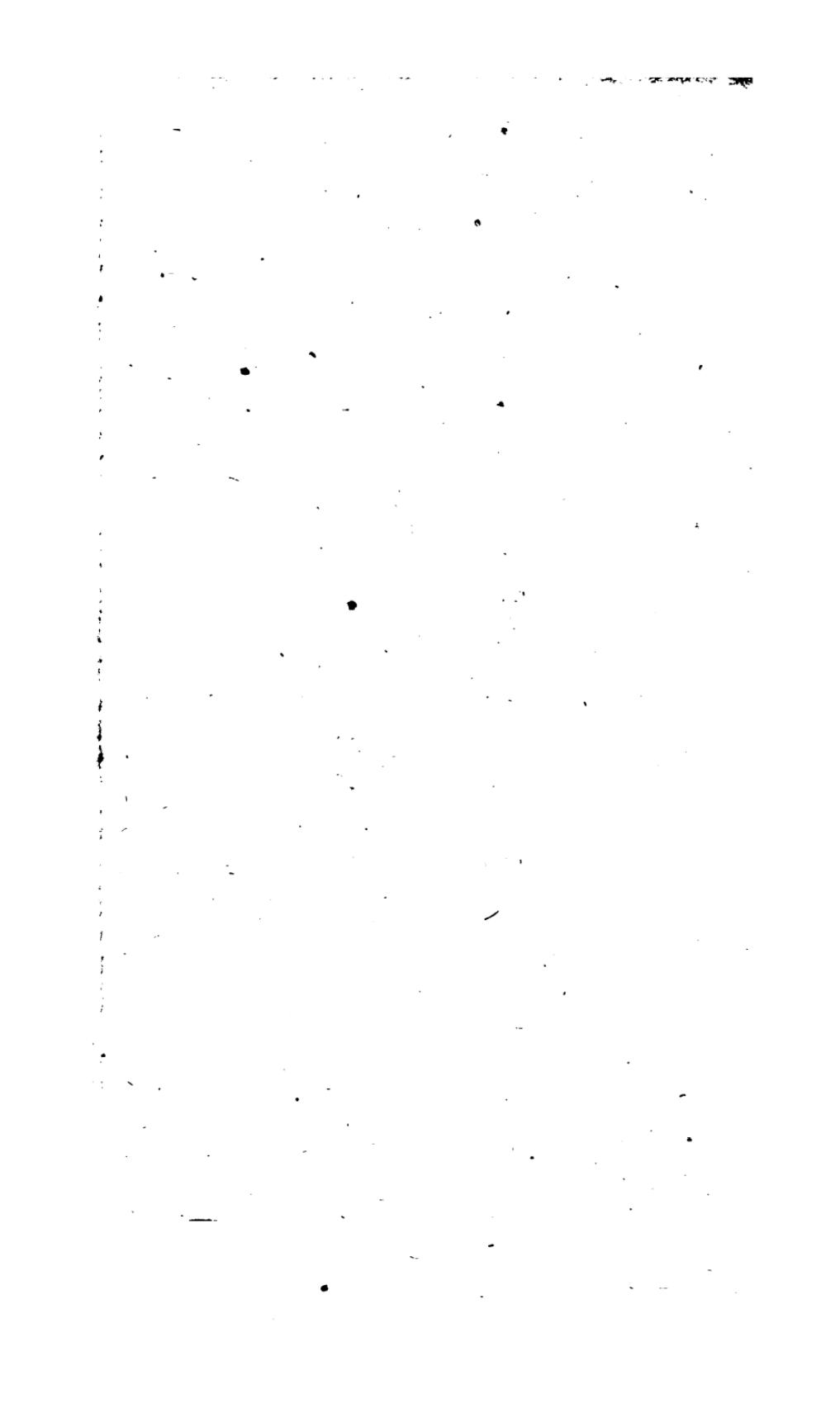
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## THE HONEY-MOON.

BY THE COUNTESS OF BLESSINGTON.

"Some persons pay for a month of honey with a life of vinegar."

NOVELS and comedies end generally in a marriage, because, after that event, it is supposed that nothing remains to be told. This supposition is erroneous, as the history of many a wedded pair might exemplify: for, how many hearts have fallen away from their allegiance, after hands have been joined by the saffron-robed god, which had remained true, while suffering all the pangs that, from time immemorial, have attended the progress of the archer boy!

Passion—possession—what a history is comprised in these two words! But how often might its moral be conveyed in a third—indifference!

Marriage, we are told, is the portal at which Love resigns his votaries to the dominion of sober Reason; but, alas! many have so little predilection for his empire, that they rather endeavour to retain the illusions of the past—gone for ever—than to content themselves with the reality in their power.

During the days of courtship, the objects beloved are viewed through a magic mirror, which gives only perfections to the sight; but, after marriage, a magnifying glass seems to supply its place, which draws objects so unpleasingly near, that even the most trivial defects are made prominent. Courtship is a dream; marriage, the time of awaking. Fortunate are they who can lay aside

their visions for the more commonplace happiness of life, without disappointment and repining.

The hero and heroine of our sketch were not of these. They had loved passionately—wildly. Their parents had, from motives of prudence, opposed their union, considering them as too young to enter a state which requires more wisdom to render it one of happiness, than most of its votaries are disposed to admit.

This opposition produced its natural result,—an increase of violence in the passion of the lovers. Henri de Belleville, our hero, was ready to commit any action, however rash, to secure the hand of Hermance de Montesquieu; and she did all that a well-brought up young French lady could be expected to do,—she fell dangerously ill. Her illness and danger drove her lover to desperation; while it worked so effectually on the fears of her parents, that they yielded a reluctant consent to the marriage, which was to be solemnised the moment that she was restored to health. The first interview between the lovers was truly touching: both declared that they must have died, had their marriage not been agreed to; and both firmly believed what they asserted.

Henri de Belleville, being now received as the future husband of Hermance, passed nearly the whole of his time with her, seated by the *chaise-longue* of the convalescent; marking with joyful heart the return of health's roses to her delicate cheek, and promising her unchanging, devoted, eternal love.

“Yes, dearest Hermance,” would he say, “when once you are mine, *wholly* mine, I shall have no will but yours; never shall I quit your presence. Oh! how tormenting is it to be forced to leave you,—to be told by your mother, that I fatigue you by the length of my visits, and to be absent from you so many long and weary hours! And you, Hermance, do you feel as I do, do you mourn my absence, and count with impatience the hour for our meeting?”

The answer may be guessed: yet, though tender as youthful and loving lips could utter, it scarcely satisfied the jealous and *exigeant* lover.

“But will you always love me as at present?” asked

the timid girl. "I have *heard* such strange tales of the difference between the lover and the husband: nay, indeed, I have *seen*; for the Viscomte de Belmonte *now* leaves my poor friend, Elise, for whole hours; yet you may remember, that before *they* were married, he, too, could hardly bear to be absent from her side. Ah! were *you* to change like him, I should be wretched."

"You wrong yourself and me, my adored Hermance, by supposing me capable of acting like de Belmonte; and, besides, your poor friend, though a very charming person, does not resemble *you*. Ah! what woman ever did? If she only possessed one half your charms, he could not tear himself away from her. No! dearest; years shall only prove that my passion for you can know no decrease, and never, never, shall the husband be less ardent than the lover! I have planned all our future life; it shall pass as a summer day,—bright and genial. We will retire from Paris, which I have hated ever since I have loved you; its noise, its tumultuous pleasures distract me. I could not bear to see you gazed at, followed, and admired. No! I feel, my Hermance, that it would drive me mad. But you, my beloved, will you not sigh to leave the pleasures of the metropolis, and to exchange a crowd of admirers for one devoted heart?"

"How can you ask such a question?" replied Hermance, pouting her pretty lip, and placing her little white hand within his: "I shall be delighted to leave Paris; for I could not bear to see you talking to the Duchess de Montforte, and a dozen other women, as you used to do, when I first knew you; and when all my young friends used to remark, how strange it was that the married women occupied the attention of the young men so much, that they scarcely took any notice of us spinsters. I should be very jealous, Henri, I can tell you, were you to show more than distant politeness to any woman but me."

And her smooth brow became for a moment contracted, at the recollection of his former publicly marked attentions to certain ladies of fashion.

The little white hand was repeatedly pressed to his lips, as he assured her, again and again, that it would be

even irksome to him to be compelled to converse with any woman but herself; and her brow resumed its former unruffled calmness.

"I have taken the most beautiful cottage orné, at Bellevue; it is now fitting up by Le Sage, as if to receive a fairy queen. *Such a boudoir!* How you will like it! We will walk, ride, drive, read, draw, and sing together; in short, we shall never be a moment asunder: but perhaps, Hermance, you will get tired of me."

"How cruel, how unjust, to suppose it possible!" was the answer.

In such day-dreams did the hours of convalescence of the fair invalid pass away; interrupted only by the pleasant task of examining and selecting the various articles for her *trousseau*, rendered all the pleasanter by the impassioned compliments of the lover, who declared that, while each and all were most becoming, they still borrowed their last grace from her whom they were permitted to adorn.

He taught her to look forward to wedlock as a state of uninterrupted happiness, where love was for ever to bestow his sunny smiles, and never to spread his wings. They were to be free from all the ills to which poor human nature is subject. Sorrow, or sickness, they dreamt not of; and even "*ennui*," that most alarming of all the evils in a French man or woman's catalogue, they feared not; for how could it reach two people who had such a delightful and inexhaustible subject of conversation as was offered to *themselves*?

At length the happy morn arrived; and, after the celebration of the marriage, the wedded pair, contrary to all established usage in France, on similar occasions, left Paris, and retired to the cottage orné, at Bellevue.

The first few days of bridal felicity, marked by delicate and engrossing attentions, and delicious flatteries, flew quickly by; reiterated declarations of perfect happiness were daily, hourly, exchanged; and the occasional interruption to their *tête-à-tête*, offered by the visits of friends, was found to be the only drawback to their enjoyment.

After the lapse of a week, however, our wedded lovers

became a little more sensible to the claims of friendship. Fewer confidential glances were now exchanged between them, expressive of their impatience at the lengthened visits of their acquaintances; they began to listen with something like interest to the gossip of Paris, and not unfrequently extended their hospitality to those who were inclined to accept it. In short, they evinced slight symptoms of a desire to enter again into society, though they declared to each other that this change arose merely from their wish of not appearing ill-bred, or unkind, to their acquaintances. They even found that such casual interruptions served to give a new zest to the delights of their *tête-à-têtes*. Yet, each remarked in secret, that "a change, had come over the spirit of their dream;" and that, when no visitors dropped in, the days seemed unusually long and monotonous. *They* were ashamed to acknowledge this alteration, and endeavoured to conceal their feelings by increased demonstrations of affection; but the forced smiles of both insensibly extended to yawns; and they began to discover, that there must be something peculiarly heavy in the atmosphere to produce such effects.

When they drove, or rode out, they no longer sought the secluded wooded lanes in the romantic neighbourhood, as they had invariably done during the first ten days of their marriage: but kept on the high road, or the frequented one in the Bois de Boulogne. Hermance observed with a sigh, that Henri not unfrequently turned his head to observe some fair equestrian who galloped by them; and Henri discovered, with some feeling allied to pique, that Hermance had eyes for every distinguished-looking cavalier whom they encountered; though, to be sure, it was but a transient glance that she bestowed on them. Each was aware that the change equally operated on both; but neither felt disposed to pardon it in the other. Hermance most felt it; for, though conscious of her own desire to see, and be seen again, she was deeply offended that her husband betrayed the same predilection for society. They became silent and abstracted.

"I am sure," would Hermance say to herself, "he is now regretting the gaieties of Paris; and this fickleness after only two weeks of marriage! It is too bad: but

men are shocking creatures! Yet I must own Paris is much more agreeable than Bellevue; heigh ho! I wish we were back there. How I long to show my beautiful dresses, and my pearls, at the *soirées*! and when Henri sees me admired, as I am sure I shall be, he will become as attentive and as amusing as he used to be. Yes! Paris is the only place, where lovers are kept on the *qui-vive* by a constant round of gaieties, instead of sinking into a state of apathy, by being lest continually dependent on each other."

While these reflections were passing in the mind of Hermance, Henri was thinking that it was very strange that she no longer amused or interested him so much as a few weeks before.

"Here am I," he would say to himself, "shut up in this retirement, away from all my occupations and amusements, leading nearly as effeminate a life as Achilles at Syros, devoting all my time to Hermance; and yet she does not seem sensible of the sacrifice I am making. Women are very selfish creatures: there is she, as abstracted as if two years had elapsed since our marriage, instead of two weeks; and, I dare be sworn, wishing herself back at Paris, to display her *trousseau*, and be admired. This fickleness is too bad! but women are all the same: I wish we were back at Paris. I wonder whether they miss me much at the club?"

Henri no longer flatteringly applauded the toilet of Hermance,—a want of attention which no woman, and least of all a French woman, is disposed to pardon. He could now (and the reflection wounded her self-love) doze comfortably, while she sang one of her favourite songs,—songs which, only a few weeks before, had called forth his passionate plaudits. He no longer dwelt in rapturous terms on her beauty; and she, consequently, could not utter the blushing, yet gratified, disclaimers to such compliments, or return them by similar ones. No wonder, then, that their conversation, having lost its chief charm, was no longer kept up with spirit, but sank into commonplace observations.

"Yes!" Hermance would mentally own; "he is changed—cruelly changed."

She was forced to admit that he was still kind, gentle, and affectionate; but was kindness, gentleness, and affection, sufficient to supply the place of the rapturous, romantic felicity she had anticipated? No! Hermance felt they were not; and pique mingled in her disappointment. These reflections would fill her eyes with tears; and a certain degree of reserve was assumed towards Henri, that tended not to impart animation to his languid, yet invariably affectionate, attentions.

Each day made Henri feel, still more forcibly, the want of occupation. He longed for a gallop, a day's hunting, or shooting; in short, for any manly amusement to be partaken of with some of his former companions.

Hercules plying the distaff could not be more out of his natural element than was our new married Benedict, shut up for whole hours in the luxurious boudoir of his wife; or sauntering round, and round again, through the pretty, but confined, pleasure-ground, which encircled his cottage. It is true, he could ride out with Hermance; but then she was so timid an equestrian, that a gallop was a feat of horsemanship she dared not essay; and to leave her with his groom, while he galloped, would be uncivil. After they had taken their accustomed ride, they invariably strolled, arm in arm, the usual number of turns in the pleasure-ground; repeated nearly the same observations, that the flowers, weather, and points of view, had so frequently elicited; looked at their watches, and were surprised to find it was not yet time to dress for dinner. At length, that hour arrived, regarded by some, as the happiest in the twenty-four; and our wedded pair found themselves at table, with better appetites and less sentiment than lovers are supposed to possess. In short, the stomachs seemed more alive than the hearts,—a fact which rather shocked the delicacy of the gentle Hermance.

During the first few bridal days, their servants had been dismissed from attendance in the *salle à manger*, because their presence was deemed a restraint. Besides, Henri liked to help Hermance himself, without the intervention of a servant; and, with the assistance of dumb-waiters, their *tête-à-tête* dinners had passed off, as they said deliciously.

In the course of a fortnight, however, they required so many little acts of attendance, that it was deemed expedient to dismiss the dumb-waiters, and call in the aid of their living substitutes.

"How tiresome it is of our cook," said Henri, "to give us the same *potage* continually!"

"Did you not examine the *menu*?" replied Hermance.

"I scarcely looked at it," was the answer; "for I hate ordering dinners; or, in truth, knowing what I am to have at that repast, until I see it; and here, I vow (as the servant uncovered the *entrées*), are the eternal *côtelettes d'agneau*, and *filets de volaille*, which we have had so often, that I am fatigued with seeing them."

"Do you not remember, *cher ami*," said Hermance, "that you told me you liked *soupe au riz* better than any other, and that the *entrées* now before us, are precisely those which you said you preferred?"

"Did I, love?" replied Henri, with an air of nonchalance; "well, then, the fact is, we have had them so frequently of late that I am tired of them: one tires of everything after a time."

A deeper tint on the cheek of Hermanee, and a tear which trembled in her eye, might have told Henri that his last observation had given rise to some painful reflections in her mind. But, alas! both blush and tear were unnoticed by him, as he was busily engaged in discussing the *filets de volaille*.

"You do not eat, dear Hermance," said Henri at length, having done ample justice to the decried *entrées*—"let me give you a little of this *roti*, it is very tender."

"It is only more unfortunate for that,"\* replied Hermance, with a deep sigh; "but I cannot eat; and with difficulty she suppressed the tears that filled her eyes, while a smile stole over the lips of her husband at her sentimental reproach.

Hermanee felt hurt at the smile, and offended, at observing that Henri continued to partake as copiously of the *roti* as he had previously done of the *entrées*. How

\* The words used by a French lady to her husband on similar occasion.

unfeeling, how indelicate, to continue to devour when *she* had refused to eat !

As soon as dinner was concluded, and the servants had withdrawn, Henri remarked, for the first time, that the eyes of his wife were dimmed with tears.

" How is this, dearest ! " exclaimed he,—" you have been weeping—are you ill ? " and he attempted to take her hand ; but it was withdrawn, and her face averted, while she applied her handkerchief to her gushing eyes, as she wept with uncontrolled emotion. " Speak to me, I beseech you, Hermance ! " continued Henri, endeavouring again to take her hand ; " how have I offended you ? "

" I see, I see it all, but too plainly," sobbed the weeping Hermance ; " you no longer love me ! I have observed your growing indifference day after day, and tried not to believe the cruel change ; but now," and here her tears streamed afresh, " I can no longer doubt your fickle nature, when I hear you avow that you get tired of everything—which means every person ; and this to me—to me, who, only a few weeks ago, you professed to adore ! Oh ! it is too cruel ! why did I marry ? " and here sobs interrupted her words.

" You wrong me ! indeed you do, dear Hermance : I said one tires of things ; but I never said, or meant, that one gets tired of persons. Come, this is childish ; let me wipe these poor eyes ;" and he kissed her brow, while gently performing the operation.

" Then, why have you seemed so different of late ;" sobbed Hermance, letting him now retain the hand he pressed to his lips.

" In what has the difference consisted, dear love ? " asked Henri.

" You no longer seem delighted when I enter the room, or join you in the garden, after being absent half an hour."

" *Half* an hour ! " reiterated Henri, with a faint smile.

" Yes ! a *whole* half hour," replied Hermance, placing an emphasis on the word " *whole*. " You used to appear enchanted when I came into the salon, at Paris, and always flew to meet me. You never admire my dress now, though you were wont to examine and commend

all that I wore ; and you doze while I am singing the songs which, a few weeks ago, threw you into ecstacies." Poor Hermance wept afresh at the recapitulation of the symptoms of her husband's growing indifference, while he soothed her with loving words and tender epithets.

Having in some measure reassured her, by his affectionate manner, harmony was again established ; but the veil was removed from the eyes of both, never again to be resumed. They perceived that the love, unceasing and ecstatic, of which they had dreamt before their union, was a chimera existing only in imagination ; and they awoke, with sobered feelings, to seek content in rational affection, instead of indulging in romantic expectations of a happiness that never falls to the lot of human beings : each acknowledging, with a sigh, that even in a marriage of love, the brilliant anticipations of imagination are never realized ; that disappointment awaits poor mortals even in that brightest portion of existence—The Honey-moon.

## GRACE FALKINER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "CECIL HYDE," &amp;c.

GRACE FALKINER was a moral phenomenon. She was an only child, a beauty, and, according to general belief, an heiress ; but, strange to say, at the advanced age of one-and-twenty, her temper was unspoiled by indulgence, her head unturned by flattery, and her hand, as yet, unsolicited by any suitor whose petition could, for a moment, be entertained by those possessed of any influence or authority with its fair object.

This exemption from the natural consequences of her position, on three points of such importance, was not equally miraculous with respect to them all. As far as relates to the two first, it must certainly be considered as an extraordinary triumph of nature over education and circumstances ; but, in the latter instance, it was referable to principles more easily explained, and more universally intelligible. Her beauty was beyond dispute ; her brother-and-sister-less condition satisfactorily established ; but her fortune,—“ay, there's the rub!”—was that algebraical abstraction, *an unknown quantity* : and, although reasoning by induction, inference, or analogy, may be perfectly admissible in metaphysics, politics, or morals, —those who are skilled in such matters are wisely of opinion, that the pretensions of an heiress can only be tested by a process little short of mathematical demonstration.

Alas ! for the chilling influence of time, and the blighting effects of intercourse with the world, in the destruction of early hopes and youthful illusions!—When we start in life—or, at least, upon town—young, artless, un-

sophisticated,—we lend a willing ear to the golden fables which conjecture loves to invent, and rumour to circulate, for no other purpose, it would seem, than to lead us astray. Strong is our belief in female perfection, and the three per cent consols. We are ready to fall down and worship the first idol, whose glittering surface can be mistaken for gold. Not a doubt have we as to the reality of her virtues, or the extent of her acres. Our fancy revels amid angels and ingots; but we are not long in discovering, that the wings with which our partiality invests the one, are, in point of fact, the more legitimate attributes of the other; and that, however that complaisant deity may court us to his temple by fair promises, we are very seldom indebted to *Hymen* for an introduction to *Plutus*.

But, to return. Although the qualified belief in her financial merits was not without its weight in maintaining her popularity, few indeed were those who stood less in need of such adventitious recommendations than Grace Falkiner. The winning softness of her manner, joined to the melody of her voice, captivated at once; and increased admiration was the invariable result of more intimate acquaintance with her. The character of her beauty was pensive; and a slight tinge of romance in her disposition gave additional zest to the cheerful and even sprightly demeanour, through which it was only discoverable at intervals:—as the stream—but we fear that the “under current” has been too often pressed into the service to admit of its introduction here, with any plausible pretension to originality; so we will spare the reader and ourselves the trouble of the simile.

In short, Grace Falkiner was “all that youthful poets fancy when they love;” both as to mental and personal attractions: and if the reader, with respect to the former, is obliged to take our word for it, in proof of the latter, at least, he has ocular demonstration; for, at the head of our narrative, he will behold her faithfully depicted in all her charms.

Grace Falkiner had lost her father when an infant, and had been brought up wholly under the care of her mother. Mr. Falkiner was a man of extensive landed property, but it was strictly entailed on the male line, and, on his

death, the estates had consequently passed to the next heir,—a nephew. His widow was handsomely provided for by a jointure of 4000*l.* a-year; but their only child, our heroine, had nothing to depend on but a sum of 5000*l.* in the three per cents; which rumour had exaggerated to an indefinite amount. Mrs. Falkiner's style of living, and, occasionally, her manner of talking, contributed to perpetuate an error, by which she hoped to profit in the establishment of her daughter. But the children of this our London world are wise in their generation; and, although her dinners were in great repute, and her weekly *soirées* remarkably well attended—although her britska seldom lacked a mounted escort in the park, and her opera-box was never without a reasonable supply of *élégans* in phantasmagoric succession—still they came to flirt, and not to woo; and postponed their declarations until such time as further evidence could be adduced on the material point which remained as yet unelucidated.

Grace, however, had a great-uncle in India, from whom she expected nothing,—but her mother hoped a vast deal. He was known to be enormously rich, unmarried, and, as far as could be ascertained, without encumbrances. He had returned to England, after a residence of forty years in the east, and gone back to India within little more than a twelvemonth; determined, as he said, to end his days in a country where he knew the faces of the people, and was always secure of a well-made curry. During his short stay in London, he had been hospitably received and entertained by Mrs. Falkiner, his nephew's widow, and had appeared to be favourably impressed by the beauty and amiability of her daughter, to whom, on his departure for India, he had dropped sundry vague hints of an intention *not to forget* her; although the extent to which he proposed exercising his powers of memory in her favour, was a point open to the most unlimited conjecture. Grace, indeed, gave herself very little trouble on the subject; and certain it is, that, however he might remember *her*, she had nearly forgotten him, when, one evening, as she was dressing for a dinner-party, a packet was delivered to her, the appearance of which denoted its great importance; for it bore the superscription, “*private and*

*immediate.*" On removing the envelope, she found two letters, both addressed to herself; one of which had a formal business-like aspect, and that decidedly travelled air by which a 'ship-letter' is generally recognisable, without the assurance to that effect usually affixed by the post-office. The letter in question, however, bore no post-mark; but in one corner were the words, "favoured by C. Briggs, Esq." It was sealed, or rather wafered, with black; and a deep black edging bore solemn testimony to the *mourning*, if not the grief, of the writer. Grace trembled as she opened the letter—for the messenger of death is always awful, even where we have every reason to believe that the victim has not been selected from among those whose existence seems necessary to our happiness.

It proved to be from Mr. ——, the solicitor of her uncle at Calcutta, acquainting her, in becoming terms, that the worthy nabob had died on such a day; and that he, the solicitor, had been named one of the executors of his last will and testament, an authentic copy, or rather duplicate of which would be forwarded to England, by the same ship which conveyed Mr. ——'s letter, and consigned to the care of Messrs. Caveat and Company, Pump-court, Temple, who were instructed to communicate to her the provisions of the aforesaid document, in which she was materially concerned.

This was an exciting piece of intelligence, and all the more so from the uncertainty in which it left the important question of the will. Grace had seen so little of her uncle, that she could scarcely be expected to feel anything like grief for his loss; and it will not, we trust, be deemed in any degree derogatory to her claims, as a heroine, on the regard and sympathy of the reader, if we acknowledge that her anxiety was chiefly directed to that financial point in the affair which, in the good old days of romance, would have been held unworthy of a moment's consideration on the part of one so young and so lovely. *Au reste*, we must take the world as we find it; the pastoral style is as much out of fashion as the chivalrous; and as, in our day, there are no Tancreds but in the opera, and no Damons but in the ballet, the fair sex may really

be excused for adopting ideas more consistent with the matter-of-fact routine of life in the nineteenth century.

Grace was hurrying to her mother's dressing-room, for the purpose of communicating the unexpected intelligence, when she recollected that half the contents of the packet remained unexamined; she therefore resumed her seat, and proceeded with the investigation. The second letter was evidently of home manufacture, and recent production; but what distinguished it, in a very marked manner, from the numerous epistolary "favours," of all colours, blue, green, pink and yellow, which it was Miss Falkiner's lot to receive, and her misfortune to be obliged to answer, was a small red morocco case of a circular form, which had been tied up with the letter by a piece of black riband. A slip of paper, attached to the case, bore the following words: "You are requested *not* to open the miniature-case until you have read the letter." This injunction was a severe trial to the curiosity of our heroine; but she had too much of the spirit of romance in her composition to interfere with the regular progress of an adventure which seemed really not unpromising. So she complied with the request of her mysterious correspondent, by giving precedence to the letter. The reader must judge of her feelings, when she read what follows:—

"*Thomas's Hotel, Berkeley Square,*  
"February 183—.

"MADAM,

"I feel considerable embarrassment in addressing you; and am really at a loss in what terms to introduce the subject which it is my duty to bring, under your notice. But, as a very singular combination of circumstances has placed me in an extraordinary position with respect to you, I have judged it advisable to communicate, at once and directly, with yourself, rather than confide the explanation of matters of a peculiarly delicate nature to the discretion of a third party.

"I am but this moment arrived in London from Calcutta, having brought from thence the letter which you will receive herewith, conveying the melancholy intelligence of the death of your amiable and benevolent rela-

tion, Mr. Herbert Falkiner, of that city. The particulars of that gentleman's will must, of course, be officially communicated to you within a very few hours; but I trust you will appreciate my motives for anticipating their formal announcement.

" You are then to know, Madam, that, by the last will and testament of your great uncle, you will succeed, as residuary legatee, to the great bulk of his fortune, (upwards of 150,000*l.*, as I am credibly informed,) upon one condition, however;—and that condition—I really have scarcely the face to write the words—that condition is, that, within six months of the period when you receive the news of Mr. Falkiner's death, you are married to me!

" I can imagine your surprise; I fear I ought to add, your indignation, at the idea of your hand being thus unceremoniously disposed of by a posthumous freak of your worthy relative. *Mais, que voulez vous?*—he was a humorist all his life; and I indulge a hope, that you will never have cause to regret the characteristic facetiousness of this last act of his existence: but I have only to say, that, if the joke should prove unpalatable to you, no undue influence shall, with my consent, be exerted, to make you enter into its spirit.

" Do not, I beseech you, be guilty of the injustice of supposing, that Mr. Falkiner's extraordinary disposition of property, and more than property, in my favour, is the result of any deliberate plan of toadyism on my part, or of any attempt to divert his succession from its natural course. The fact is, that I had about as much expectation of a legacy from Mr. Falkiner as I had of a seat in council (excuse my professional and local illustrations), having been in that worthy gentleman's society but half a dozen times in my life; and although, upon one of those occasions, I was fortunate enough to render him a slight service, my interference in the case to which I allude was prompted entirely by common motives of humanity, without the slightest reference to the feelings of gratitude which it might excite, or the personal advantages to myself which might result from it.

" This, however, is not the time to trouble you with

the details of my acquaintance with your eccentric relation. It is of more importance that I should satisfy your very natural curiosity with respect to myself. I accordingly subjoin the following particulars on that interesting subject, humbly hoping, that, as I 'nothing extenuate, so you will not 'set down aught in malice.'

"First, as to birth and family. I am an only child, and an orphan. With respect to my parents, I can only say, that I was always given to understand, that I had had a father and mother; but I am unfortunately unable to speak to the fact from my personal knowledge. From the age of eighteen months, I was brought up by a distant relative, to whose care I had been left, as the guardian of the very little property bequeathed to me by my father. My education has been like that of most of my acquaintance. I was kept, for a certain number of years, at school,—made to pay for a good deal of Greek and Latin, and got very little value for my money; but, as usual, I suppose, that was my own fault: at fifteen, my guardian got rid of me (a good riddance,) by sending me out to India as a cadet.

"*Quant au personnel* ;—I am above five feet nine in height; weight, averaging from nine stone to nine and a half; complexion, just now, approaching to mahogany, but, I trust, capable of being bleached by change of climate; my hair, dark brown, except where it is growing grey,—a change which, I am sorry to say, is in rapid operation. This, however, is of less consequence, as my once flowing locks are falling off with still greater rapidity. My age is two and thirty; my rank, that of a lieutenant in the —— Bengal Cavalry; my present income 100*l.* per annum, exclusive of regimental pay and allowances; my prospects, *nil*. I have no doubt that I should play very well on the guitar, had I ever learned,—that I should sing very sweetly, if I had any voice,—and that I should indite very pretty verses, if I were only to try. My dancing would also be unexceptionable, were it not for an unfortunate halt in my gait,—the result of a shattered ankle, which was my reward for assisting to storm an impregnable and unpronounceable fort, some ten years back. As to my temper, it would not, perhaps, become

me to say much. I may, however, assert, with tolerable confidence, that I am seldom *very much* put out, as long as I have every thing my own way : *au reste*, we all know, that, in the social as well as the physical climate, an occasional hurricane is of use in clearing the atmosphere. I have only to add, that I never smoke in the presence of a lady ; and that my constitution is unimpaired by brandy and water. 'What more can I say ?'

"I will now conclude, with an humble and dutiful request, that I may be allowed the honour of a personal interview with you at your earliest convenience ; and, in the mean time, I recommend to your notice the accompanying miniature, which will present you with a tolerably accurate delineation of that *extérieur* which I have partly described above, but which, as the heralds say, 'in the margin more lively is depicted.'

"I have the honour to be, Madam,

"Your faithful and devoted Servant,

"COURTENAY BRIGGS."

It would not be easy to do justice to what was passing in the mind of our heroine, as she read this despatch. Every feeling of womanly pride, dignity, and delicacy, revolted against the unceremonious disposal of her hand which her uncle had made the condition of his posthumous bounty. Under such circumstances, his legacy was little more than a mockery and an insult. Should she submit to be transferred, as so much "live stock," to the possession of Mr. Courtenay Briggs, by the stroke of a pen ? The idea was insufferable, degrading ! But, in spite of her just indignation, she could not help feeling a slight degree of curiosity respecting the appearance of the individual to whom she had been thus cavalierly bequeathed ; and she opened the miniature-case with a degree of eagerness worthy of a more pleasing, if not a more interesting, occasion. Heaven and earth ! what a scarecrow presented itself to her view ! It was "such a man," she thought, "so wo-begone," who

"Drew Priam's curtain at the dead of night."

The face was long, thin, and angular ; the features, pinch-

ed ; the complexion, to all appearance, undergoing a transition from the yellow-jaundice to the blue-cholera ; the hair scanty, and bristling, " like quills upon the fretful porcupine ;" the cheeks, hollow, the eyes, sunk and lustreless ; and, to crown all, this oriental edition of the *anatomie vivante*, was arranged in a uniform of sky-blue and silver, which hung upon him as a great-coat hangs upon a peg, giving no visible assurance of any internal substance analogous to the outward form in which the tailor had arranged his materials.

Long and silently did she gaze on this attractive effigy of her *soi-disant* intended ; nor could she sufficiently admire the delusion of that *amour-propre*, which could lead him to believe that he was recommending himself to the good graces of a fair lady, by means of a portrait which might have served as a most appropriate representation of the " knight of the rueful countenance." But if she had at first resolved on meeting with a decided negative the advantageous proposal of Mr. Courtenay Briggs, her determination was strengthened tenfold, now that she could form some idea of the extent of the sacrifice which she was required to make, in order to obtain her inheritance. But before she had made up her mind as to the most judicious mode of signifying her resolution, under the circumstances, Mrs. Falkiner, surprised at the unusual delay in the performance of her daughter's toilet, entered the room with a view of hastening her proceedings,—the carriage being at the door to conduct them to their dinner engagement.

All the documents were, of course, immediately submitted to her inspection ; but very-different, indeed, were the feelings they excited in her breast, from those which Grace experienced on the occasion. Having long survived the period of romance, Mrs. Falkiner had ceased to regard the institution of matrimony in any other than a financial point of view ; and from a fancied eminence of *soi-disant* philosophy, she looked down upon all who were accessible to *les foiblesses du cœur*, as so many absurd visionaries, who deserved to be brought to their

senses by the rough discipline of experience, and recalled to practical notions by

“—that worst of earthly ills,  
The inflammation of our weekly bills.”

Accordingly she viewed the affair on its bright side ; and —never, for a moment, doubting her daughter’s acquiescence in so profitable an arrangement—congratulated her, with great sincerity, on this sudden turn of fortune in her favour.

“A hundred and fifty thousand pounds !” exclaimed she, in a tone of exultation ; “why, Grace, you are the luckiest girl in the world ! What a dear, *good* creature that uncle of yours was, to die so opportunely !”

“But, dear mamma,” remonstrated Grace, “think of the horrid condition which he has attached to his legacy. Do you really suppose I could consent to marry that odious wretch in the sky-blue ? Not for ten times the sum.”

“Psha, Grace ! how can you talk such nonsense ? Odious wretch, indeed ! I declare I think—judging from this picture—that he must be a particularly gentlemanlike person,—a *leetle* too pale, perhaps, but that is by far the best fault of the two.”

“Such a name, too !” ejaculated Grace.

“The name *is* objectionable,” said Mrs. Falkiner, “but that is easily remedied. He must take your name ; and Mrs. Courtenay Falkiner will sound particularly well, I think. Come, sit down at once, like a good girl, and write a civil answer to the poor man. We must, of course, keep out of general society for a short while ; but you may as well ask him to dine with us *en famille* to-morrow.”

Grace, however, though usually submissive, conceived that the occasion fully justified the display of a little constitutional resistance to the maternal authority. She loudly protested against giving any encouragement to Mr. Briggs ; and firmly, though respectfully, avowed her determination to relinquish the fortune sooner than accept the encumbrance.

This declaration produced, between the mother and daughter, a discussion of a rather animated character.

But we deem it inexpedient to enlighten the reader as to the exact particulars of what passed; conceiving that these little family misunderstandings, from which even the best regulated *ménages* are not wholly exempt, are more judiciously left to his imagination, or, perhaps, we should rather say, to his memory. As in most other discussions, however, each party remained unconvinced by the arguments brought forward on the other side; and Mrs. Falkiner had almost exhausted her powers of reasoning,—so to speak,—on the subject, when she suddenly recollect ed that Col. and Mrs. Dynewell, with a whole host of distinguished guests, were, in all probability, waiting dinner for them; and visions of over-boiled fish, over-baked *pâtés*, over-roasted mutton, spoiled *entrées*, &c. &c. &c. rose in awful reproach before her.

“God bless me!” exclaimed she, “we are forgetting the Dynewells all this time—and it is now half-past eight! What shall we do?”

“Send an excuse, of course,” said Grace. “I will write, and say that the loss of a near relation makes it impossible for us to attend. I am sure,” continued she, half aside, “I might almost say, ‘a severe domestic affliction,’ for it seems likely to prove one to me.”

“No!” said Mrs. Falkiner; “on second thoughts, we had better go: nobody knows anything about this affair yet; and, as this packet has arrived so late, we are not obliged, you know, to have heard anything of it till to-morrow; and by that time, I hope, you will have come to your senses, and be in a more reasonable frame of mind on the subject: besides, we are surely not to go without our dinner, because your great-uncle chooses to die in India.”

Accordingly to Colonel Dynewell’s they went, and arrived in better time than they had anticipated, for they were not the last; and, consequently, Mrs. Falkiner’s intended solemn asseveration, in the teeth of facts, that *eight* o’clock, instead of *seven*, had been written on their invitation-card, was not called into play. Dinner was at length announced, and Grace found herself at table near the last arrival,—a young man with light hair and eyebrows, and a reddish-brown face, who seemed to be ra-

ther *désorienté* as to the usual topics of London conversation between strangers. At length, in reply to some observation of hers on passing events, he said :—

“ I am afraid you think me a sad Goth to know so little about what is going forward ; but the fact is, I only arrived in London a few hours ago, having landed yesterday at Portsmouth from India, where I have been for the last four years. I am in the Bengal Cavalry, and am come home on sick leave.”

“ Sick leave, indeed !” thought Grace, as she observed the energy, little characteristic of an invalid, with which he was despatching a plateful of “ curry for three.”

“ You seem rather better,” observed she.

“ Yes,” said he ; “ the *voyage* has done wonders for me ; but I was a sad object when I left Calcutta.”

“ Had you a pleasant passage ;” inquired Grace.

“ Very,” responded the B. C. man. “ Our vessel was a small one,—only six hundred tons,—but we had several ladies on board ; and Briggs, of ours, who is certainly the most agreeable fellow in the three presidencies—the three kingdoms, I should say—was of the party : so the *voyage* could not fail to be pleasant.”

“ What !” said Grace, whose cuiosity was thoroughly awakened : “ did you say that you had an officer of the name of Briggs in your regiment ?”

“ Yes, to be sure—Courtenay Briggs ; the best fellow in the world, and one of the handsomest, into the bargain. Are you acquainted with him ?”

“ Not at all,” said Grace, much surprised by this testimony to the personal attractions of her correspondent ; “ but I think I have heard his name.”

“ Very likely. And have you heard any thing of the odd business that brings him to England ?”

It was perhaps fortunate for Grace that the eyes of her oriental friend were too busily intent on his beloved curry to admit of his remarking the becoming suffusion which exhibited itself on the face of our heroine, when she heard his unconscious allusion to her own affairs. She, of course, professed her entire ignorance on the subject ; and he proceeded to enlighten her.

“ It is the oddest thing in the world. He has been

left a large fortune by a man whom he had not seen half a dozen times in his life, on condition that he marries the old fellow's niece."

" Dear, how odd!" said Grace.

" Briggs happened to render him a slight service about a year ago, when they met on a tiger-hunt. *Puss*—a remarkably fine animal in his way—had fastened on the trunk of old Falkiner's elephant (that was the man's name), when, through some carelessness of his people, I suppose, the straps gave way,—the old gentleman came tumbling down, head over heels, howdah and all,—and the tiger would have made minced meat of him in no time if Briggs had not jumped down from *his* beast in the twinkling of an eye, and discharged his rifle right into the ear of the assailant. Old Falkiner said very little about it at the time, and was so busy scolding his own retinue for their negligence, that he seemed almost to have forgotten the acknowledgment due to Briggs for having saved him from such an 'ugly customer.' He asked him to dinner, however, two or three times in the course of last year, and was generally civil to him; but not so much so as to make Briggs imagine that he was overwhelmed by the weight of the obligation: so that, when the old gentleman died suddenly one fine morning, it was the greatest surprise to Briggs to find that he had carried his gratitude to so unusual an extent."

" Was the fortune left to himself, then?" inquired Grace.

" No—not in the first instance, at least. It is left to old Falkiner's great-niece, provided she marries Courtenay within six months after his arrival in England: if she refuse at the end of that period, he gets the whole unconditionally."

" And pray," said Grace, very much edified by this last piece of intelligence, " does he know what sort of person the lady is?"

" Yes," answered the B. C. man; " he saw her several times when he was on leave in England, two years ago, but he was not acquainted with her. He says, she appeared to be a good-humoured, fat girl, with very thick ankles,—not at all the sort of person to suit his taste;

indeed, so little to his mind, that, if she would consent to it, he would be too happy to split the difference, and give up half the fortune to her. But if, on the contrary, she should insist upon marrying him, he must, of course, submit, as a hundred and fifty thousand pounds are not to be had every day in the year."

Grace, though an acknowledged beauty, was perhaps as free from personal vanity as any of her sex ; but she must have been more than woman, if she could have heard, without the liveliest feelings of indignation, this disparaging account of her personal claims; and the insulting hypothesis so innocently advanced by her indiscreet friend. "If she should insist upon marrying him!" Good heavens ! *She*, the admired, the courted, the idol of her own circle—to hear herself spoken of as one whose alliance was a penalty which would be gladly evaded by the sacrifice of half a fortune ! It was insufferable ; and it was with the greatest difficulty she could command herself sufficiently to keep up the appearance of unconsciousness which the occasion required. She contented herself with observing, however, that "perhaps Mr. Briggs might not find it so difficult as he imagined to be released from his obligations in the affair ; that there were *some* people whom one would not marry if they had the whole wealth of the Indies ; and that she had heard a very different account of the gentleman in question from that which his friend now gave of him."

"Well," said her communicative acquaintance, "there is no accounting for difference of opinion : but you will perhaps be able to form your own judgment on the subject, by and by ; for my friend Briggs has half promised to look in here this evening."

"You don't say so!" exclaimed Grace, turning quite pale.

"Yes, indeed," was the answer. "He is close by, at Thomas's, where I am staying also. When my uncle found that he was with me, he wanted him to dine here to-day ; but he excused himself, on the ground of having some business to attend to, requesting, however, that he might be at liberty to make his appearance in the evening, if he should find himself at leisure."

This announcement was, as may be supposed, highly embarrassing to Grace, and she thought every minute an hour, until, Mrs. Dynewell having given the signal of retreat, the ladies repaired to the drawing-room. When arrived there, she pleaded a violent head-ache, as an excuse for an early departure; and, with some difficulty, succeeded in hurrying Mrs. Falkiner away before the gentlemen had made their re-appearance. Her great anxiety was, of course, to avoid the possibility of a *rencontre* with Mr. Courtenay Briggs; but as she passed through the hall, on her way to the carriage, a gentleman, who had just entered the house, drew back to make room for her; and as she acknowledged his politeness with a bow, she heard the name of Mr. Courtenay Briggs, travelling up-stairs before him, in the usual telegraphic mode of progression. Grace was closely shawled and muffled, the weather being cold, so that the stranger could scarcely have distinguished her features, had he even looked at her with attention; but the single glance she gave to his face and figure, sufficed to convince her that a more flagrant libel had never been perpetrated by pen or pencil, than the miniature which he had thought proper to send as the authorized representation of his outward man. Instead of the wo-begone, bilious-looking starveling she had been led to expect, she saw a tall, elegant young man, of the most *distingué* appearance, not a hair's breadth too thin for waltzing or sentiment, and with a face, whose slightly sunburnt hue seemed in perfect accordance with the manly character of the well-formed and aristocratic features. His motive for thus practically vilifying his own pretensions was not to be misunderstood; and this last instance of bad faith and deceit completed the measure of Grace's irritation. The remonstrances of her mother were unavailing; and, indeed, after what Grace had accidentally heard that evening, Mrs. Falkiner could scarcely attempt to combat a determination, which a due sense of the dignity of her sex could not have failed to dictate to any woman similarly circumstanced.

The next day, Grace replied to the communication of Mr. Courtenay Briggs, by the following letter:—

*"Harley street.*

"I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of yesterday's date, and I lose not a moment in relieving your mind on a subject which I have reason to know gives you so much uneasiness.

"When I tell you that I am perfectly well acquainted with the feelings which dictated that letter, and the motives which actuated you in its composition, you will not be surprised to learn that I at once, and without hesitation, release you from the embarrassing dilemma in which you are placed, between your natural wish to obtain the fortune of my deceased relative, and your distressing fear of being hampered with the encumbrance which his caprice has attached to its possession.

"It appears that you have seen me, and met me in society, during your last visit to England,—a fact of which I had not the slightest recollection: your memory, it seems, is more tenacious, if not more complimentary. Be it so;—you *may* possibly be acquainted with my face and appearance, but you must indeed be wholly ignorant of my disposition and character, if you can fear my acquiescence in a proposal so repugnant to every sentiment which becomes my sex. Rest assured that you need not have resorted to deceit or subterfuge in order to ensure my instant rejection of a suit,—if such it may be called,—urged under circumstances so insulting, not to say degrading, to the person to whom it is addressed.

"What could have been the object of my uncle in inflicting this posthumous outrage on my feelings, I am wholly at a loss to divine: with that, however, I have nothing to do. It only remains for me to assure you, that his benevolent intentions with respect to you may be fully accomplished; and that you will not be called upon to sacrifice half the fortune,—no! not even a sixpence of it,—to secure the *unfettered* enjoyment of the remainder.

"I return the portrait with a sight of which you have favoured me: I shall not make any observation on the fidelity of the likeness. Were I to compliment your

modesty, it would only be at the expense of your candour.

"Yours,

"GRACE FALKINER.

"To Courtenay Briggs, Esq."

What rejoinder was "put in" to this "*retort courteous*," we are unfortunately unable to ascertain; for the missive which made its appearance in Harley-street, about an hour after the despatch of Miss Falkiner's letter, was returned by her, unopened, to the place from whence it came, she having recognised the handwriting of her very unsentimental *adorer*. Several equally unsuccessful attempts were subsequently made by him to obtain a hearing, or an interview; but Grace was inexorable. In spite of all her mother's remonstrances, she resolutely refused to see him, or to receive any communication from him; and it was only through the medium of the solicitors, Messrs. Caveat and Co., that he was at length enabled to convey to her an assurance of his anxiety to come to some arrangement which might be mutually satisfactory to both parties, and his extreme regret, that, from an erroneous impression of his views and feelings, &c. &c. To all such professions, however, she turned a deaf ear; and Mr. Courtenay Briggs was, perforce, reduced to the necessity of postponing the execution of his pacificatory intentions until the expiration of the six months, at the end of which period he would be competent to act for himself in the affair, as the fortune would then be his own.

The six months had almost expired, when Grace Falkiner, under the chaperonage of her cousin, Lady Raynham, was slowly making her way through the crowded saloons of St. James's, at the birth-day drawing-room. As they left the throne-room, the first person they encountered was Colonel Dynewell, standing near the door, in conversation with another gentleman, whose face betrayed, on their approach, a degree of embarrassment amounting almost to agitation. It needed not the corroborative evidence of the sky-blue and silver, to convince Grace

that she stood in the august presence of Mr. Courtenay Briggs, of the Bengal Cavalry.

Grace would have gladly passed on, and avoided any thing like the appearance of recognition between persons so awkwardly circumstanced ; but the pressure of the crowd forbade all rapid progress, and the unconscious Lady Raynham made so determined a halt before the gallant colonel and his friend, that our heroine felt very much inclined to give her credit for the employment of a little *malice* on the occasion ; an offence of which, it is fair to believe, she was wholly guiltless, being, in fact, completely ignorant of all that had occurred relative to the testamentary dispositions of the late Mr. Falkiner, and unaffectedly glad to see an old friend.

“ Is Mrs. Dynewell here ? ” inquired she.

“ No,” said the Colonel ; “ delicate health,—immense crowd,—too great an undertaking,” &c.

“ Then, if you are not on duty elsewhere, do, there’s a dear, good man ! give me your arm to the carriage. I really can hardly move among all these people ; and perhaps Mr. ——, your friend, would have the kindness just to take charge of my cousin.”

The colonel complied with the greatest alacrity ; and Courtenay Briggs, thus appealed to, advanced with equal *empressement*, and held out his arm to Grace, who could not well refuse to take it. He seemed by this time to have quite recovered from his momentary embarrassment, and commenced talking to her with as much *disinvoltura* as if he had entirely forgotten the awkward circumstances connected with their correspondence.

At first she was naturally silent and reserved ; but, as he was very persevering in his efforts to draw her into conversation, and, to confess the truth, very agreeable in his manners, she gradually relaxed a little in the frigidity of her demeanour ; and, at the end of twenty minutes, during which they were slowly progressing towards the palace doors, she was surprised to find herself chatting with him as familiarly as if he had been an old, not to say a favourite acquaintance.

In the mean time, Lady Raynham and the colonel still kept their position in the van ; and beguiled their time, to

all appearance, as agreeably as the couple who brought up the rear of the party.

The colonel was a fat, good-humoured, talkative, and hideous little man, of a *very certain age*; for he was *very certainly* on the wrong side of fifty; but he was, nevertheless, a great favourite with the ladies, and a more expert small-talker than half the men of thirty about town. On the present occasion he seemed more than usually entertaining, if one might judge by the frequent, though, of course, subdued laughter, which his sallies elicited from his companion.

"Really," observed Grace to her *cavalier*, after one of these slight bursts of merriment, "my chaperon is behaving most shockingly; I never saw such a flirtation! I must positively let Lord Raynham know what is going on, in his absence from town."

"Is his lordship, then, generally supposed to be the favourite in that quarter?" inquired Briggs.

"Really," said Grace, with astonishment, and some degree of *hauteur*, "I must say that is a very extraordinary question."

"Nay!" said Briggs, "I beg pardon if I have been indiscreetly inquisitive; but the allusion was your own."

"Allusion!" repeated Grace; "surely a jocular remark about an old friend like Colonel Dynewell, who has known my cousin from her cradle, cannot be considered as authorizing you to call in question her regard for her husband."

"Husband!" exclaimed Briggs; "why, you don't mean to say that she is married? I never heard of it."

"*Cela n'empêche pas*," said Grace; "were you acquainted with her before her marriage?"

"I?—to be sure!—why, yes!—that is—I knew who she was. But how long is it since it took place?—very recently, I suppose?"

"Not very," said Grace; "she has been married these two years."

"Two years!" reiterated Briggs: "Impossible!"

"All I can say is," said Grace, "that I was present, and officiated as bridesmaid on the occasion."

"Is it possible!" said Courtenay; "her name was?"—

"Falkiner, like my own," said Grace.

The sky-blue hero gave a start, almost amounting to a bounce.

"What!" exclaimed he, "is *your* name Falkiner? and were *you* related to Mr. Herbert Falkiner, of Calcutta?"

"I am his great-niece," said Grace, quietly, rather enjoying the embarrassment of her new acquaintance, although not quite understanding its cause.

"But, surely," continued Briggs, with increasing agitation, "you are not—you cannot be—Miss Grace Falkiner, of Harley street?"

"Excuse me," said our heroine, "however incredible it may appear, my name *is* Grace, and I *do* live in Harley street."

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Briggs; "and I——"

"Oh!" said Grace, "I may spare you the necessity of being equally communicative; I am perfectly aware that I have the pleasure of speaking to Mr. Courtenay Briggs, of the Bengal Cavalry—or, perhaps, by this time, I should say, Mr. Courtenay Falkiner."

Words are inadequate to describe the confusion of poor Briggs at this observation of our heroine. But, fortunately for him, they had reached the door, and "Lady Raynham's carriage stops the way," was too earnestly vociferated to allow of any delay in obeying the summons. With a countenance, pale and red by turns, and a trembling hand, he assisted her into the carriage; and, after it had driven off, he stood for some time as if nailed to the spot, until unceremoniously warned off by a "make way there, if you please," and a slight hint from a policeman's truncheon, to the same effect.

"Well!" said Colonel Dynewell, as they walked off towards Pall Mall, "what do you think of Miss Falkiner, my dear Briggs?"

"Think!" exclaimed Briggs,—"I think that she is an angel, and that I am a confounded ass!"

"Oh, he!" said the colonel.

"When I thought her a goddess, she thought me a fool, And I swear she was most in the right."

"Have you been making love to her, after all?"

"Making love!" said Briggs; "if I had not been a positive idiot, I ought to have been married to her ages ago."

"I know that as well as you," said the colonel.

"How?" inquired Briggs, hastily; "who could have told you any thing about it?"

"Oh! my dear fellow," said Dynewell, "it is not such an easy matter to keep so good a story quiet. I had it all from your particular friend, my nephew John, immediately after your arrival in England. Old Falkiner left his money to his great-niece, on condition that she should marry you. You were rather anxious to retain the fortune, and very desirous to eschew the heiress, whom you spoke of as a *good-humoured fat girl, with very thick ankles*; a description which, in all points except the good-humour, seems to me anything but accurate. However, there is no accounting for difference of tastes and opinion."

"But there is *no* difference of opinion!" said Briggs; "it is all a mistake. I took it for granted, that my intended bride was that dumpy cousin of hers that was with her to-day, and whom I met three years ago, as Miss Falkiner, at Cheltenham, where she was undergoing a course of the waters at the time—a circumstance that would be enough to disgust me with any woman; faugh! I own I was *not* particularly anxious to marry *her*, and therefore did not quite make the most of my pretensions in the letter I sent her, accompanied by a portrait which might pass for a very strong *post mortem* likeness of me, for it was painted while I was slowly recovering from the jungle fever. What a dolt I have proved myself!"

"Well!" said the colonel, "you need not break your heart about it; the awful six months, I think, are nearly up; the fortune will be your own; and in that there can be 'no mistake.'"

It was true; the six months had expired that very day, and Briggs was now in undisputed possession of the property.

It was little more than a week after the birth-day when Grace received the following letter, which, although she

recognised the hand-writing of the superscription, and the device of the seal, a pardonable curiosity withheld her from returning unopened.

*"Oriental Club,—such a date.*

" Six months have now elapsed since the period when I first addressed you ; and, although from a laudable feeling of pride you rejected all my overtures at the time, I venture again to approach you under other, and, I trust, more auspicious circumstances.

" After what occurred the other day at the drawing-room, you will not be surprised to learn that I have been under a mistake with respect to your identity. To that circumstance, and to that alone, is to be attributed anything in my brief and slight intercourse with you, by which you may have been annoyed or offended. The letter which I wrote to you on my arrival, and the observations which were, I conclude, reported to you, as made by me, during my voyage from India, were severally written and spoken under the erroneous impression that the lady whose inheritance of her great-uncle's property was contingent upon her marrying me, was a Miss Grace Falkiner, whom I had seen at Cheltenham during my last visit to England, and whom I have since discovered to be Lady Raynham. I trust that you will not consider me as intentionally failing in proper respect to your fair and noble cousin, when I acknowledge that I did not contemplate the prospect of being united to her with any very satisfactory feelings. I ought, perhaps, to apologise for saying so ; but such is the fact ; and I can only observe, in extenuation of this unwillingness, for which I should in vain seek for a plausible excuse, either in the appearance or character of the lady in question, that we cannot command our own predilections. I must, therefore, trust to your indulgence for my excuse.

" Your answer to that first letter, however, containing, as it did, so dignified and well-merited a rebuke, produced a great change in my feelings on the subject ; and, had you honoured me with an interview, according to my earnest and reiterated entreaties, I should have been delightedly undeceived, and you might perhaps have been

moved from your stern resolve by the sincerity of that homage which, in your real character, you must always command. But you were inexorable.

" Thus, it is not my fault if the period allowed you for deliberation by Mr. Falkiner's eccentric will has now expired. By that circumstance, the property, as you are, no doubt, aware, has been wholly vested in me. My motives are, therefore, not liable to misconstruction, when I thus earnestly and humbly renew my suit, and implore you not to doom me to final rejection, as a punishment for my unintentional, and, as far as you are concerned, unconscious offence.

" But should you be, as I sincerely trust you are, somewhat softened towards me, by this apologetic explanation, it is still possible that you may be withheld from acceding to my prayers, by a consideration which is likely to carry no little weight with one swayed by such exalted principles of delicacy and independence. Anticipating this objection, however, I have been fortunately able to obviate it. Learn, then, that the fortune thus unaccountably bestowed on me, is no longer mine. In compliance with Mr. Falkiner's will, his property had all been realized, and placed in the funds. In this shape it came into my possession some days ago; and it has cost me a little more than a few strokes of the pen to transfer it to one who has a far juster claim on Mr. Falkiner's inheritance. The sum of 150,000*l.* now stands *in your name* on the bank books.

" Thus, then, my fate is entirely at your disposal. You are free to act without any other bias than your own sense of justice and propriety. But I solemnly declare, that not a sixpence of the property in question will I receive, save in the manner contemplated by the original framing of your deceased relative's bequest.

" What I might have consented to some months ago, when under the mistaken impression before alluded to, I know not. Now, I will enter into no compromise on the subject. The fortune is wholly yours; and I either share it with you as your husband, or return to my military duties in India, as poor a man as I left it, with the consolation of having expiated my folly, and, at least, secured your esteem.

"I shall wait impatiently for your answer. Should it not be wholly unfavourable, I shall present myself in Harley street to-morrow; but, if you are determined not to give me a chance, I have only to say—*adieu!* My passage shall be immediately taken on board a vessel which sails for Calcutta about the middle of next month, and I shall molest you no more.

"COURTENAY BRIGGS."

What was the precise course pursued by our heroine on the receipt of this letter, we are unfortunately unable to state; nor, indeed, have we space to enter into any further particulars.

The following extract, however, from the list of presentations at the last drawing-room of the season, will, perhaps, throw sufficient light on the subject.

"Mrs. Courtenay Falkiner, on her marriage, by her mother, the Hon. Mrs. Falkiner."

## MINNA MORDAUNT.

BY MRS. S. C. HALL.

Do you not observe the gentle smile and large affectionate eyes of Minna Mordaunt? Look, I pray you at the roundness of her arm, and the beauty of her taper fingers ;—there, hanging on the edge of her basket as daintily as if they rested on the strings of a guitar :—how they ever raised that basket, full of round white eggs, to the top bar of the stile, is a wonder to me. I never in my life saw eggs so badly packed. Why, there is not a blade of straw in the basket to prevent the one from crushing against the other! How exquisitely the black velvet band, with its rich clasp, sets off the delicate fairness of her throat! And did Mr. Parris for a moment imagine that any reader of "The Book of Beauty" would believe in the veritable rusticity of such a being?

In years long past, there dwelt—just where you see the spire of the village church peering above yonder trees—a courtly gentleman,—a man of fashion,—proud as proud might be, stately, rich,—ay, very rich,—an only son ;—and only sons, I have observed, unless well tutored in their childhood, are seldom much beloved: the selfishness which springs and flourishes in the hearts of all youths, requires careful pruning, or else it grows into a foul and loathsome weed, choking the plants of honest virtue, which yield, in humbler soils, a useful fruitage. This only son was rich, and proud, and handsome, gay and thoughtless,—thoughtless of everything but *self* :—there are many such, even in the present age. Virtue and honour do not keep pace, in these improving times, with what is generally termed intellect.—But this has nought to do with Minna Mordaunt.

This great man *fancied* he loved the daughter of one

of the farmers who rented a portion of his father's estate,—a simple country girl she was, but the pride of the whole village—a beauty really rustic ;—and he frequently met her at that same stile where Minna Mordaunt is now standing : *there*, dressed in the very fashion you have but now looked upon, with her eggs *properly* arranged for market, often has the rich gentleman waited the poor girl's coming ;—ay, and after a little while *she* waited too for *him*. I do not like to give new readings of old stories ;—the poor girl loved, and—was forsaken. She could not bear that those who once admired and regarded should consider her disgraced ;—she felt she was forsaken, and she left her father's cottage one long autumn night, and managed her escape and her concealment with so much secrecy, that no one knew her motive ; nor any, save her mother, her dishonour : in six months from her departure, the mother and the secret slept within the same grave, beneath the shadow of the old church-wall ;—you may see the grave now, if it please you walk so far ;—it is much talked of in the village, for one night there sprung over it a tomb of the whitest marble, as if from the green grass, and on it were engraven only these words :—

“ WE CAN HAVE BUT ONE MOTHER !”

Time passed on : the farmer died,—the daughter and her mysterious disappearance were alike forgotten. The “only son” of our story had also buried his father, and increased in wealth, and in pride, and in honours ; but, I know not how it was, there was a shadow over him and over all he did ;—he prospered, yet he was not blessed ;—he married a right noble lady, beautiful, and of high blood, and it was said he loved her,—perhaps he did. I have witnessed some cranks and turns in what the world called “love,” which seemed to me far more like hate. They lived together many years, but the lady's lips forgot their smiles, and her voice its music : then at last she also died, leaving her husband a very glorious heritage—five noble boys.

It was most strange ; but, one by one, those children

drooped, faded, and, in less than six years after their mother's funeral, five coffins, all of different lengths, were placed within the vault with hers.

\* \* \* \* \*

It was a sunny day in June; the windows of a spacious drawing-room in the chief hotel at Dover were open, yet the rays of the "god of day" were carefully excluded by closely drawn blinds;—a lady reclined upon a sofa, and her daughter, seated by her side, was reading to her from an open volume that rested on her knees; two mulatto women were arranging various packages; and it was evident that the party had recently landed from an Indiaman, which, from the windows of the room, was distinctly visible. The mother was dressed in widow's weeds, the daughter in slight mourning.

"I am tired of that book," exclaimed the elder lady; "do find something to amuse me, Minna."

"Births, deaths, and marriages," exclaimed the young lady, smiling, and taking up a paper. She read, first the births, then the marriages, then the deaths: the last on the dark list was as follows:—

"Died, on the morning of the 7th, at Mordaunt-hall, Edwin, last surviving child of the Honourable Charles Leopold Danforth Mordaunt, to the inexpressible anguish of his father, who has followed his amiable and accomplished wife and five sons, to the grave within six years."

A shriek from one of the Ayahs told the young lady that her mother had fainted.

Mrs. Browdon was the widow of an old general officer of the Bengal establishment, who had taken it into his head to marry when most men think of death: and soon after his final departure from drill and dinners, the physicians abroad sent his widow to Europe, to recover her health, which they said her native air would restore. She did not believe them.

About three hours after Mrs. Browdon had fainted, her daughter was sitting on the same spot, *alone* with her mother. She was deadly pale, and the tresses of her silken hair clung to cheeks which were soaked with tears.

" You know all now, Minna," said Mrs. Browdon, " you know all now ; yet you have not cursed me ! "

Minna flung herself on her knees by her mother's couch, and pressed her weak and fading form to her bosom.

" I have told you all—all—how I was deceived,—how I fled my home,—how you, my child, were born,—how true a friend I found,—how *she* protected me,—how I met General Browdon, who, believing me a widow offered me his hand,—how I risked all, and told him TRUTH ;—but the old man loved me still ; he called me weak, not wicked,—*he* pitied, and forgave ;—but, Minna, your mother could not forgive herself ; your sweetest smiles were ever my reproaches,—silent, unmeant, yet still reproachful. And now—that you know all—you do not curse me, Minna ! Can you, can you forgive me ? "

" My dearest mother, you know I do ; you know I have ever, ever *will* bless you, and the kind old general :—*he* was not my father ? then tell me of my father,—my real, real father," said the lovely girl.

" Minna, he is sonless," replied her mother ; what you read, was his record."

" Dear mother, then," exclaimed her daughter, all woman's feelings rallying round her heart,—" dearest mother, cannot you, too, pity and forgive ? "

" Forgive, as I was myself forgiven," said Mrs. Browdon. " I can—I can—I do forgive, and from my soul I pity him."

Alas ! why should so sweet a face as Minna's be linked to so sad a tale ? it is like wreathing a garland of cypress round a moss-rose ! and yet the story must be told :—it has already recorded many deaths ; it must note another.

Mrs. Browdon's presentiment on leaving India was too fatally fulfilled ; the doctor's prophecies proved false ; the breezes of its native country could not renovate a plant which had blossomed and faded under the fervid excitement of the East : she felt that her very hours were numbered, and she immediately wrote, recommending her child to the protection of—a father !

" Had I found," she wrote, " on my return to England, that you were encircled by blessings, you should have

remained ignorant of the existence of your daughter; but, knowing your bereavements, it would be ill of me to take from you the only child the Almighty has spared you."

" You are so like what I was at your age, my child," she said, as she placed the letter in Minna's hands, " that if Mordaunt could but see you in the dress he first saw me, at the foot of the church hill, resting against the stile which divides Mordaunt-park from Woodbine-hollow, it would hardly need this letter to tell him who you are.

" We cherish first affections with a tenderness and care which the interests and feelings of after-life look for in vain. I have received homage, such as is never paid to our sex in England; my robes have been sewn with pearl; and you will find, Minna, treasures of gold, silver, and brocades, such as are seldom seen, within those cases; yet, yonder, in that small green trunk, is the remnant of something that I loved, when I was happiest."

At her mother's desire, Minna brought the box; her thin, trembling fingers undid the fastening; *there* were no brocades, no gold, no jewels! it contained nothing, save the straw cottage-hat and dress of an English peasant girl. Minna looked into her mother's eyes,—she dreaded that she raved,—but those beautiful eyes were mild and calm, and full of tears.

" Beneath," she continued, " is a basket. When first I met *him*, that basket hung upon my arm, filled with a tribute from our humble homestead, which it was my duty to carry to *his* mother. I remember, on my return, his filling that basket, Minna, with roses,—ay, roses!—but *not* roses *without thorns*. Those were my robes of innocence! I scorned them afterwards, and wore others, which I then called *fine*: these were discarded; but in my affliction I remembered them, and brought them with me; a feeling of mingled pain and pleasure urged me to do so. I thought they would recall my innocence; but, no! *that* could not be: I am sure they stimulated me to after good; and perhaps their coarseness *kept* me humble,—at least they have caused me many tears; and tears, my child, soften and fertilize the heart: we learn of tears what we cast off with smiles!"

Poor lady! she died that night; not, however, without further converse with her daughter.

Minna in a little time repaired to her mother's native village; she learned that her father had grown more morose than ever; that he shunned all society.

"I have never seen him smile," said the old landlord of the inn.

"But I have seen him weep," said the still older landlady, "and that last Sunday, at the stile called 'Beauty's Ladder,' where, long ago, he often met poor Minny Graham: he goes there every Sunday, when he ought to be at church."

"And so ought you, dame, not spying after your landlord; at any rate, you should be wise enough to keep your news to yourself. What gentleman, think you, likes to be seen crying?"

"Better, I guess," replied the dame, "to be ashamed of the sin, than ashamed of the tears: I am sure I did not think there was a tear in him till I saw it."

The next Sunday, "the strange young lady," as Minna was called by the villagers, was not at church. Need I say where she was?

Mordaunt was proud of his daughter. The lonely place in his heart was filled; he had something to love,—something belonging to himself: he felt his youth renewed while looking on the image of what, in his youth, he had once, though for a little time, really loved.

## A SCENE IN THE LIFE OF NOURMAHAL.

BY L. E. L.

It was a large lonely looking hall, with nothing in it that marked the usual splendor of the East. There were no carpets, and the mats were formed of the scented grass,—one of those common luxuries which summer bestows on all. The frescos on the walls were dimmed by time, and the golden letters of the sentences from the Koran were rough and dull. Still, there was much of cheerfulness, nay, of grace, in that desolate apartment. The silvery fall of the fountain mingled with youthful voices, and its spray fell like pearl on the lilies below. The slaves seated around were gorgeously apparelled; and the scarfs that they were working were scarcely less fresh than those that they wore. Seated a little apart from the rest, but equally busy with themselves, was a lady, employed in tracing some rich arabesques upon delicate china. She was very young; but there was that in the compressed lip and curved brow which spoke experience,—experience which can teach so much, and in so little time. She worked like one whose mind compels itself to the task, but whose heart is not in it. A deeper darkness filled the large and dreaming eyes; and more than once a slight start, and then a yet more rapid progress of the pencil, told that there were thoughts which had mastered for a moment, only to be put resolutely aside. But, as the colours became shadows, and the rapid twilight merged in sudden night, and the slaves eagerly sought the garden for their hour's accustomed relaxation, the proud and lonely beauty gave way to her reverie. A softness for an instant unbent the set and stately brow, and her small fingers woke, low and indistinct, a few

chords from the chitar beside, and words almost as low and indistinct came from her lip.

Mournfully, how mournfully,  
Think I of my lover!  
Round a weary pillow  
Does one image hover,  
O'er the sunny waters gliding  
Are many shadows thrown;  
But the flower by it drooping  
Sees one sweet shade alone.

"Folly; folly of the young and loving heart!" exclaimed the singer, ceasing abruptly in song; and, drawing up her stately figure to its full height, she began to pace the solitary hall. "Folly, indeed!" muttered she, in a lower tone; "and yet, how I loved him! How well I remember the first day that the young and graceful prince came to my father's palace. My soul at once knew its predestined idol. With what delicious fear did I bind the yellow champac in my hair, when I met him secretly in the cedar grove! Oh, my father, was it not cruel to wed me with another? But even that hated link is broken! and how—" her face grew deadly pale, and the white brow glistened with the damps that rose upon it. The darkness seemed fearful; and, rubbing two pieces of sandal wood together, she hastily lighted a small lamp on a table near.

The startled terror of remorse that dares not think of what it fears, is as inconsisent as all other human feelings. The attention of Shire Askuns's lovely widow was caught by a mirror on the table. She took it up and gazed on the face it reflected, earnestly, coldly,—rather as woman gazes on the features of her rival than her own.

"I am beautiful," said she, slowly; "and yet that beauty, which is triumph to another, is to me mortification. He saw me, I know, when I was first brought here, prisoner, slave, in that harem where he once asked me to be queen. Can loveliness lose its power? Ah, yes! when love can lose its truth. Weak and impetuous, yielding to temptation, but trembling to enjoy the reward

of the committed crime ; such is the man of whom my heart made its divinity,—for whose sake I would have toiled as a slave ; ay, and do ; but with far other aim now. Let us but once meet again, Jehanghire, and thou art mine ! but I—I can never be thine again. Life, throne, fortunes, we will yet share together ; but my heart, never, never more !”

For a few listless minutes she gazed from the window, rather for distraction than amusement. The Jumna was flowing like a dark and glittering beryl amid its melon trees. Perched on the top-most boughs, the herons rested their long and snowy necks beneath their wings, breaking with their white presence the long lines of shade. Some three or four little flames, like meteors, seemed dancing down the river, now flinging their tremulous lustre on the waters, now all but shipwrecked by the broad leaves and crimson flowers of the lotus. They were the tiny barks launched by her young slaves, formed of a cocoa-nut shell, and filled with fragrant oil, whose burning was to be an augury for the gentle hopes that trusted themselves to such frail freightage.

Nourmahal smiled bitterly, and turned aside. Such graceful fantasies belong to the childhood of Love: to Love, the credulous and the dreaming ; and such Love had long since passed away from Nourmahal. She asked of Fate for a sterner sign, and a darker omen. The river seemed to mock her feverish unrest with its tranquil beauty. She looked out from another window, which commanded one of those vast plains—dry ; bare, like the human heart, which so often exhausts its own fertility ; yet there was something striking in the very desolation. The clear moonshine turned the sand to silver ; and there it lay like a vast unbroken lake, without ripple or shadow, one bright and glittering expanse. Suddenly the quick eye of Nourmahal detected a slight speck on the shining surface ; it approached rapidly ; and she saw a vast snake making its swift circles : one of its rings like dark jewellery, winding into another, till the vast expanse was passed, and its speckled length became again a shadow, a speck, and nothing.

“ That reptile,” muttered Nourmahal, “ was the sa-

viour of my childish life. I laugh at such vain belief, and yet it haunts me. I feel as if its presence here were an omen. Is my destiny about to fulfil itself.

While she was speaking, a step at the extremity of the chamber drew her attention. She knew well the low dwarfish figure of the fakir that entered to ask that charity of which she was so lavish. "I am rich to-day," said she, giving the dwarf a little bag filled with coins. The creature took them in silence, and stood gazing upon her. The contrast was strange between them ; the one looking the very poetry, the other the caricature, of humanity.

"They were talking of you in the divan to-day ; the omrah Mohareb is forbidden to appear at Agra."

"The shadow of the mighty emperor rests on the meanest of his slaves," replied Nourmahal ; "and it must have been a keen observer that marked the small teeth that pressed the lip till it wore a hue like coral, ere the waters have dried upon it."

"The shadow was deepest on his own brow," returned the fakir ; "the emperor was thinking of you, lady."

"And I," continued Nourmahal, "must resume my nightly task, or it may chance that, on your next visit, the poor will watch your going forth in vain."

The fakir took the hint, and departed, both understanding each other ; and Nourmahal held her breath for a moment. It was as if to inhale a new existence ; the light darkened in her eyes, and the delicate lines of her brow knit to almost sternness. The gilded balls of the ghurree dropping into the water, warned her of the hour, and clapping her hands, the sound assembled her slaves. All were soon seated at their accustomed task ; and no one who had seen the lovely painter bending o'er the cup on which she was tracing, in a fanciful arabesque the name of Jehanghire, would have dreamed of the agitation, that even her self-control could scarcely master. She felt that her destiny was on a cast. None but an ear, quickened as the mind can quicken the faculties of the body, could have heard a step that hesitated on the threshold. Nourmahal felt it on her heart,—not with the sweet, quick beating which it used to excite, but as a warrior

hears the first trumpet of the coming battle on which he has staked his all. She moved not from her graceful attitude ; and nothing could be better calculated to display her perfect form. The head, small as an Arab steed's, but with hair whose long black plaits reached to the ground, bent so as to show the curved neck, and the finely cut profile, while the curled eyelashes told how dark were the eyes that they concealed. The whole position bespoke despondency ; and so, too, did the dress. Her slaves were richly garbed, but Nourmahal had on only white muslin, without an ornament of any kind. In her belt, sole mark of her birth, was a small poniard ; it had no sheath ; but there was crusted blood upon it. It was that of the omrah who had intruded upon her solitude but the evening before. Yet how little did the fierce or the scornful seem to suit the sweet, sad face which Jehangire saw drooping over his name. Jehangire was the stranger on the threshold. He entered—all at once knew their master, and fell prostrate.

"Leave us," said the sultan, approaching Nourmahal. She rose on her knee, and remained gazing upon him, her large eyes radiant with delight.

"Nay," exclaimed she, as he took her hand to raise her ; "let me be happy for a little. Let the sunshine of that beloved face enter my heart. It seems but yesterday that we parted, Jehangire. Ay, still the same stately and glorious form that taught me to know how the gods look on earth."

"You have not forgotten me, then ?" said the king.  
A look was her only answer.

"This is but a gloomy place," continued he, glancing round. "You must be wretched here ?"

"Wretched ! I can sometimes see you ride past in the distance."

The emperor gazed on the soft dark eyes, which filled with large bright tears as they gazed upon his own.

"Why should we not be happy ?" said he ; "It is of no use dwelling on what has been. Why should we part ?"

"We have never parted, my lord," replied Nourmahal.

"Do you think your image could pass from the heart where it had once been enshrined?"

The next day saw Nourmahal on a throne ; Jehangire at her side ; the court at her feet. But there was a troubled shadow in the depth of those midnight eyes ; and scorn curved the small red lip, if for a moment its settled smile passed away. There was but one thought in her heart, half triumph, half bitterness.

"I have won him, and shall keep him ; for to his weak temper habit will be as fetters of iron. I have won him—but how? He remembered not the earnest and devoted love of the young heart which was his, and his only. Even my beauty failed to influence his selfish carelessness : but he is mine by a more potent spell. Love may be given in vain,—beauty may be powerless ; but I have mastered by the deeper magic of flattery."

#### NOTE.

Those who only know Nourmahal by Moore's delicious descriptions in "The Light of the Harem," the most exquisite painting to which words ever gave music, are little acquainted with the resolution and talents of this extraordinary woman. Jehangire, after one or two fruitless attempts, had her first husband murdered, and herself placed in his harem. Yet, by some caprice of remorse, or of despotism, he never made an attempt to even see the object of his early passion. The weak only are discouraged by difficulties ; and Nourmahal's ambition looked steadily onwards, she supported herself and slaves by the exercise of her abilities, whose display became the talk of the court. Every lover was steadily rejected ; and her own hand and poniard avenged her, when one of the omrahs intruded on her solitude. Jehangire's curiosity was awakened ; he saw her again ; and from that moment began an influence which endured to the last. One of the many recorded triumphs of the strong over the weak mind.

## JULIET'S TOMB IN VERONA.

BY THE AUTHOR OF RIENZI,  
&c. &c.

"BUT I assure you, sir," said the cicerone, "that there is nothing to see in it."

"More than in all Verona."

The cicerone shrugged his shoulders, and we continued our way.

There is no town in Italy more interesting in its appearance than Verona. A quiet and venerable melancholy broods over its streets and houses. Its architecture of all forms; its peculiar casements and balconies; the half Gothic, half classic, stamp of its antiquity, have, to my eyes, an inexpressible charm. I think to recognise something Shakspearean in the aspect of the place; it accords well with the memories with which Shakspeare has associated its reverent name; and I own, that I trod its motley streets with less respect for its history than for its immortal legend:—for was it not here that the gay Mercutio and the haughty Tybalt ran their brief career?—along these very streets went the masked troop, with their torch-bearers, and merry music, on the night that Romeo made himself a guest in the halls of Capulet and won the heart of the impassioned Juliet! The Gothic lattice, the frequent balcony, the garden seen through the iron-gates that close yonder ancient court, do they not all breathe of Romeo—of Shakspeare—of Romance?—of that romance which is steeped in the colours of so passionate, so intoxicating a love, that in order even to comprehend it, we must lift ourselves out of our common and worldly nature—we must rise from what our youth has been made by the arid cares and calculating schemes

of life—we must shut ourselves up, as it were, in a chamber of sweet dreams, from which all realities must be rigidly excluded—we must call back to the heart, to the sense, to the whole frame, its first youth—we must feel the blood pass through the veins as an elixir, and imagine that we are yet in the first era of the world when (according to the Grecian superstition) LOVE was the only deity that existed, and his breath was the religion of creation. Then, and then only, can we acknowledge that the legend of Romeo and Juliet does not pass the limits of nature. For the great characteristic of their love is youth—the sparkling and divine freshness of first years: its luxuriant imagination—its suddenness and yet its depth—the conceits and phantasies which find common language too tame, and wander into sweet extravagance from the very truth of the passion,—all this belongs but to the flush and May of life, the beauty of our years—the sunny surface of the golden well. You see at once the *youngness* of that love, if you compare it with the love of Anthony and Cleopatra in another and no less wonderful tragedy of the great master. The love, in either, passes the level of human emotions—it is the love of warmer hearts, and stronger natures, than the world knows. But the one is the love that demands luxury and pomp; it dispenses with glory, but not with magnificence: it lies

"In a pavilion, cloth of gold, of tissue,  
O'erpicturing that Venus where we see  
The fancy outwork nature."

Take away the majesty from that love, and it sinks into the gross passion of a hoary dotard and an old coquette. But everything about the love of Juliet is young, pure even in its passion; it does not lose worlds, but it can dispense with the world itself; it asks no purple canopies, no regal feasts; its wine is rich enough without dissolving pearls in its sparkling freshness;—it is precisely that which belongs to the beautiful inexperience of the passionate girl;—it is the incarnation of passion, solely because it is the incarnation of youth. And *there*, in that barn belonging to the convent of the Franciscans, the very convent of the good old friar of the tale—no roof above—the damp mould below—the broken, oblong se-

pulchre itself half filled with green water, is the tomb of this being, made as familiar to us by genius, as if she had really moved and lived before us—as if we had gazed upon her in the revel, and listened to her voice from the moonlit balcony. Nothing can equal the sadness and gloom of the spot. On the walls yet remain two old and faded frescos on the religious subjects favoured by Italian art; morning and night the dews fall through the roofless hovel, and the melancholy stars gleam on the tomb whence the very dust is gone! It has not even the grandeur of desolation—no splendid sepulchre—no cathedral-aisle—no high-arched roof impresses you with awe. A heap of fagots, piled carelessly at one end of the out-house, proves the little veneration in which the place is held; the spot is desecrated; the old tomb, with its pillow of stone, is but a broken cistern to the eyes of the brethren of the convent! The character of the place is drear, unsanctifying, slovenly, discomfort! Beautiful daughter of the Capulet! none care for thee, thy love, or thy memories, save the strangers from the far isle whom a northern minstrel hath taught to weep for thee! It is this peculiar dreariness, this want of harmony between the spot and the associations, which makes the scene so impressive. The eager, tender, ardent Juliet—every thought a passion—the very Hebe of romance, never fated to be old;—and this damp unregarded hovel, strewed with vile lumber, and profaned to all uses! What a contrast!—what a moral of human affections! Had it been a green spot in some quiet valley, with the holiness of nature to watch over it, the tomb would have impressed us with sweet, not sorrowful, associations. We should have felt the soft steps of the appropriate spirit of the place, and dreamed back the dreams of poetry, as at Arqua, or in the grotto of Egeria. But there is no poetry here! all is stern and real; the loveliest vision of Shakspeare surrounded by the hardest scenes of Crabbe! And afar in the city rise the gorgeous tombs of the Scaligers, the family of that duke of Verona who is but a pageant, a thing of foil and glitter, in the machinery of that enchanting tale! Ten thousand florins of gold had one of these haughty princes consumed, in order to

eclipse, in his own, the magnificence of the tombs of his predecessors. Fretted and arched in all the elaborate tracery of the fourteenth century, those feudal tombs make yet the pride and boast of Verona;—and to Juliet, worth, to the place, all the dukes that ever strutted their hour upon the stage, this gray stone, and this mouldering barn! It is as if to avenge the slight upon her beautiful memory, that we yawn as we gaze upon the tombs of power, and feel so deep a sympathy with this poor monument of love!

The old woman that showed the place had something in her of the picturesque;—aged, and wrinkled, and hideous;—with her hard hand impatiently stretched out for the petty coin which was to pay for admission to the spot;—she suited well with all the rest! She increased the pathos that belongs to the deserted sanctuary. How little could she feel that nothing in Verona was so precious to the “Zingaro” as this miserable hovel!—“And if it should not be Juliet’s tomb, after all!” Out, sceptic! The tradition goes far back. The dull Veronese themselves do not question it! Why should we? We all bear about us the prototype of that scene. That which made the passion and the glory of our youth, the Juliet of the heart, when once it has died and left us, lies not its tomb within us, forgotten and unregarded,—surrounded by the lumber of base cares, polluted by strange and indifferent passers by (the wishes and desires of more vulgar life), unheeded, unremembered,—the sole monument which sanctifies the rude and commonplace abode in which it moulders silently away?

## FÉLICITÉ.

BY THE COUNTESS OF BLESSINGTON.

Oh! would I were a lady,  
In costly silks to shine ;  
Who then could stand beside me ?  
What figure match with mine ?

Who'd rave about my mistress,  
With her pale languid face,  
If they could see *my* pink cheeks,  
Edged round with Brussels lace ?

How well her cap becomes me!  
With what a jaunty air  
I've placed it off my forehead,  
To show my shining hair!

And I declare these ribands  
Just suit me to a shade ;  
If Mr. John could see me,  
My fortune would be made.

Nay, look ! her bracelets fit me,  
Though just the least too tight ;  
To wear what costs so much, must  
Afford one great delight.

And then this pretty apron,  
So bowed, and frilled, and laced,—  
I hate it on my mistress,  
Though well it shows my waist.

I must run down one minute,  
That Mr. John may see  
How silks, and lace, and ribands,  
Set off a girl like me.

Yet all of these together,  
Ay, pearls and diamonds too,  
Would fail to make most ladies look  
As well as—I know who.

## THE GRECIAN WIFE.

BY MISS LOUISA HENRIETTA SHERIDAN.

IN the summer of 1832, an English party, consisting of a lady, her son, and daughter, prevailed on me to accompany them on a voyage to the Mediterranean, professedly to explore the beauties of its shores, but in reality to try the effect of sea air for the invalid Clara, the youthful idol of our circle, whose gently expressed wish for my society had all the power of a command ; and, after a prosperous passage along the coast of Italy, their commodious yacht brought us among those themes of ancient and modern song, the Greek Isles. The novel scenery, with the luxuriant vegetation of its exquisite climate, enchanted our invalid ; and Ypsarà appearing to elicit her strongest preference, we decided on reposing there after our voyage, and took a temporary residence near Ajio Sotira ; from hence we daily made excursions to places inaccessible for a carriage ; Clara being frequently induced by her picturesque enthusiasm to over-  
sk her failing strength.

Having often heard of the remarkable view from Mount Mavrovouni, she was tempted, one cool, gray morning, to visit it early with Frederick and myself ; and we remained sketching from different points, unmindful of the sultry glory of a southern midday sun, until turning to address Clara, I perceived she had fainted over her spirited sketch. In great alarm, Frederick bore her towards a sequestered villa we had previously remarked, while I almost flew up the path before him, to solicit assistance, until a sudden turn brought me beneath a varandah, and in presence of a young Greek lady.

Never shall I forget the noble vision of loveliness which met my gaze, as I breathlessly explained, and apologized for my intrusion. In all the majestic freshness of early womanhood, she was seated watching the slumber of a cherub boy, whose rounded cheek was pillow'd by her arm : her costume, of the richest materials, selected with the skill of a painter, consisted of a *foustanella* of the lightest green satin, under an open *guna* robe of violet velvet, starred and embroidered in gold, and displaying her swan-like neck and bust, covered by a pearl network : the small *fessi*-cap of crimson velvet, encircled with gold zechins, was lightly placed on her profuse silken-black hair ; and, as she listened, my request was already answered from the depths of her soft lustrous eyes, ere her reply, in the purest Italian, could find utterance.

Clara was soon established on the gorgeously-rayed couch, and recalled by the gentle cares so gracefully bestowed by the fair Greek, whose infant charge, now awake and gaily lisping, had nestled into my arms, and was archly misleading my efforts to pronounce his name, Polizoides, correctly. His joyous exclamation first made us aware of the arrival of an officer, of slight, elegant, and very youthful appearance, so strikingly like our lovely entertainer, that I asked, with almost certainty, “ *Il vostro Fratello, Signora?* ” A blush of pleasure accompanied her smiling reply : “ *No ; il mio Marito, Lochagos\* Mavromikatis.* ”

The boy was instantly in his father’s arms, who welcomed us with a graceful and high-bred cordiality ; and we prolonged our stay while he discoursed on the stirring themes of national interest, with all the impetuous energy natural to his youth, his country, and profession of arms ; the fond eyes of Anastásoula, no longer languid, echoing his rapid eloquence with their kindling flash, indicating the possession of woman’s most beautiful and most fatal gift, intense feeling. So charmed were we with these youthful lovers (who we found were also orphan cousins), that their animated wish for increasing our intimacy was met with equal fervour. We found both were high-

\* *Lochagos*, captain.

ly gifted, and exceedingly well informed; and from that time scarcely a day passed without a visit or note between us.

About six weeks after this occurrence, Frederick Vernon came in hastily one morning, looking agitated and deadly pale; Clara, with an invalid's perception, eagerly demanded the cause.

"The whole town is ringing with a spirited but most hapless act of Mavromikális'," he replied; "he was ordered by Ektatos\* Koliopoulos to march with his regiment against Ajio Steffano, which happens to be his native village, inhabited by his relations and family retainers; he calmly requested an exchange of duty for some other not requiring a personal conflict against the actual ties of nature; but he was coarsely ordered to march instantly, or surrender his sword as a traitor to his party. Highly excited by this unexpected alternative, he hesitated and remained silent; when a foreign officer advancing, laid his hand on the sword, saying, superciliously, 'Lochagos, you must renounce that of which you make no use!' Mavromikális felled him to the earth, drew the sword, and saying, 'it should never be stained by himself, or disgraced by another,' he snapped the blade, and threw it at the feet of the commanding officer."

"Knowing his impetuous character," said Clara, "I can scarcely blame him; but what will be the result?"

"Alas! there is no uncertainty, dearest; guilty of having rebelled against orders, and of striking his superior officer, he is taken to the Fort prison, and by the Greek military code, the sentence of *death* is inevitable!"

On recovering from the first shock of this overwhelming intelligence, I proceeded to the villa; here a hurried and defaced note from Anastásoula awaited me, stating, "she had gone to seek the aid of a distant friend; alone, and disguised, lest she might be intercepted." Sadly I returned home, and found Frederick had sought admission to the prisoner in the Fort; but this the foreign sen-

\* *Ektatos*, governor.

tinel had refused, coarsely saying, "It would be time enough to see him three days hence, when led forth for execution!"

As a last resource we framed a petition to the stern Ektatos, signed by the English and leading Greeks; but he replied, the state of regimental insubordination was such, that he had been waiting to make a striking example of a man of rank and influence, such as Mavromikális; and therefore all interference was in vain.

The awful ceremonial of death was arranged in all its melancholy solemnity; the soldiers, looking pale from their distressing duty, stood silent as the grave. A movement arose among the crowding spectators, and the prisoner was led forth, no longer in that uniform which had proved so fatal, but habited in the flowing tunic and vest of his native place; this, however, did not conceal the hasty ravages of sorrow on his young frame, hitherto firm though slight, but now devoid of elasticity as he mournfully stepped towards the doomed square. For the first time he raised his head, and looking towards heaven, was soon lost in mental prayer; then murmurs at his extreme beauty came from the crowd, and while their anxiety was at its most painful height, a peasant girl pressed in front of the line, setting down a lovely boy, who joyously bounded towards the condemned, exclaiming, "*Mamma! my own Mamma again!*"

That sound caused an electric change in the bearing of the prisoner, whose abstracted thoughts were recalled to earth by nature's soft bonds; the long, long embrace, the hysterical maternal cry of "*my Boy! my Boy!*" proved to the spectators that the unerring perception of affection had exceeded theirs, and taught the infant boy to discover, in the disguised prisoner, his own loved mother, whose life he had thus preserved!

Having failed in all her appeals for pardon, Anastá-soula had effected her entrance into the fort, disguised so that even the prisoner did not recognise her; and, professing to be an agent of his wife's, had prevailed on him

to escape, and conceal himself on board Vernon's yacht, where, she added, his family would join him. He effected all she had well arranged by faithful agents; but he little thought that his heart's treasure was to be the price of his deliverance; he had even experienced a half-reproachful regret that Anastásoula had not risked a personal interview, to cheer him for his perilous undertaking;—so seldom does man divine the devotion of woman, or guess the ecstasy arising from self-sacrifice for an idolized object, intense in proportion to the extent of what she has relinquished; for the woman who adores, there is but one hopeless suffering, the desolating conviction of having lost the heart which has cast its spells over her first affections.

\* \* \* \* \*

Ektatos Koliopoulos, on learning the exchange, and concluding the rebel was beyond his reach, withdrew from the manifestations of popular feeling; and the heroic Anastásoula was borne nearly lifeless to our house. Her alabaster skin had been stained to the deep tint of her husband's, and the resemblance made complete by the sacrifice of her luxuriant tresses, so that nothing but childhood's instinct could have discovered her. We soon after received a private intimation, from the cautious Ektatos, that he had commuted the sentence of death, for instant banishment from Ypsarà; and having no ties there, we hastily broke up our establishment, carrying away our Greek friends, whom we left to retirement and affection at Tenedos.

\* \* \* \* \*

Our English party were at Corfu in 1833, when the governor gave an entertainment to the young Otho, on his route to take possession of his new kingdom. I had the honour of waltzing with this good-natured, plain, flat-featured, Moorish-looking prince (whom I found, like myself, much fonder of dancing than politics, and who, whatever sort of king he may be, is one of the best waltzing partners in Europe, which is much more agreeable);

I took an opportunity to relate the foregoing trait of his new nation ; and, as I felt that no waltz-loving prince could refuse a petition while dancing to "The Notre-dame," I made mine in such effective terms, that I had the pleasure, soon afterwards, of adding a bright ornament to his court in the fascinating Anastásoula, the devoted young GREEK WIFE.

## HELEN.

## A SKETCH.

BY HENRY F. CHORLEY, ESQ.

“Thou’rt constancy!—I’m glad I know thy name!”

THE HUNCHBACK.

“She is far from the land where her young hero sleeps,  
And lovers around her are sighing.”

MOORE.

IT was a rich, warm, golden evening, early in autumn, showing that most beautiful appearance of nature, on one side of the heaven, the sun sinking down to rest in a glory of mellow light and gorgeous colour, and on the other, the pure, pearly, crescent moon, rising above the tree tops, with a single star at her side, and the sky between as cloudless and placid as if it *could* never be crossed by a storm. The cawing of a large company of returning rooks was the only sound that broke upon the ear, and that not unpleasantly—the air was fresh, without a breath of dampness or frost; it was a night, in short, to invite the three ladies of Fairmeadows to linger long upon their terrace seat, which, shaded by a thousand fragrant deciduous plants and shrubs, commanded an extensive view over the whole domain. The ladies, however, did not linger there for the sake of the bright sunset, or to watch the tender, rising moon:—and two of them at least were talking so fast and so earnestly, as to drown (as far as they were concerned) the pleasant talk of the birds coming home to their own tall elms for their night’s rest.

“So like one of your father’s strange, random tricks!  
Had he consulted me, had he given any time to me to

consider—to write an answer, instead of bringing her down upon us in this peremptory way—and none of us, too, knowing what she is like in the least, or what . . .”

“Perhaps a fairy,” said one of the younger ladies, playfully.

“Perhaps a fool,” said the other in a hard voice, which promised a hard countenance, and a hard heart;—neither of the two, it may be said, on acquaintance, belied the promise.

“So much the better if she be,” replied her mother, scarcely less bitterly, “for a fool you *may* manage; but I suspect we shall find your aunt Legarde’s daughter something less tractable.”

“She was very handsome, my aunt Legarde, was she not?” asked the younger voice.

“Indeed, I can’t tell; I never saw her very often. A gentleman’s beauty, I dare say, but bold and self-willed, and fond of being flattered. O, I was not sorry, I promise you, when she made the match she did; and your father (she was his favourite sister, and he could never forgive being deceived) swore he would see her no more. No, she was *not* handsome, but eaten up with romance, and poetry, and nonsense, and all that sort of thing; and I dare say her daughter will turn out her counterpart.”

“A sentimental young lady, who writes verses, perhaps, and sits up to look at the moon,” sneered Miss Harden.

“Or a beauty, perhaps, who steals all our lovers from us, Alicia,” said her younger sister, archly.

“For shame, Lucy, you are too pert to say such things; this comes of bringing you out too early.”

“O, let her go on, if it amuses her,” said Miss Harden, thinking aloud in the most acid tone of twenty-seven; “I assure you, mamma, I don’t mind it.”

But the distant sound of swinging gates, and then of approaching wheels, put an end to this little scene, and in another moment the carriage was at the door, and the hero restored to his family, (have I not said that I am speaking of events that happened in the memorable year of the battle of Waterloo?) half lifted, half bore from the

vehicle the unexpected and unwelcome subject of the conversation just chronicled.

"Bless you, Helen," said the veteran, kissing her throbbing forehead; "I hope you are not much tired with your journey:—cheer up, and remember you are at home!—and now Gertrude, Alicia, Lucy, come to me, all of you—at once;" and in the embrace of the moment, the new comer was permitted to stand aside, to feel that most perplexing and desolate of all feelings—a sense that she was alone among strange kindred.

The first ecstasy of meeting was over, and candles were lighted, and the ladies then turned an eager, two of them a curious look, towards their new relation. Alicia felt her heart sicken at the first glance, for she was aware that a beauty had come in among them—that pale, and fatigued, and wretchedly invalided as she seemed to be, Helen Lagarde could not be passed over, or hidden under a bushel, for her exquisite form, and her complexion as transparently fine as the inmost leaves of certain delicate flowers,—to say nothing of large sibylline eyes, and hair as excellent in its profusion as in its rich, silky, intense blackness,—for her bonnet being laid aside, it fell round her like a heavy veil. Lucy, too, herself but slenderly gifted with personal graces, had unconsciously taken an inventory of these things; but she was, as yet, unsoured by chasing realities and only catching shadows, and there was an expression of regret, a world of sad memories in those dark, dewy eyes, which at once made her regard the stranger with an interest as deep and compassionate as she could feel. And Helen's voice, too, though musical beyond most other voices, was so sad, and her breath came and went so rapidly,—and her colour changed as quickly as the clouds pass—Lucy loved her at once, because she felt that she had known sorrow.

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Two months passed rapidly away, and Helen Lagarde was, by all parties concerned, considered as one of the family of Fairmeadows. In any other house, she would in that short space of time have won the love of every member of the family; but Lady Harden was sharp, and suspicious, and worldly; possessed of one of those warped

minds, which it would almost seem *must* see everything crooked, and one of those untamed tongues which wound where they should be most earnest to comfort. The maiden estate of her eldest daughter, who was waning into premature thinness,—her hair, by the sprinkling of silver, which would not be hid, even anticipating Time, —she felt to be a reproach, and it was not to be forgiven against Helen (poor girl! innocent as the babe unborn of any designs to allure or conquer) that in the course of the two first months she had spent at Fairmeadows, she had received twice as many proposals of marriage. “She was positively magnetic,” Lucy would say, playfully; “there was not a male creature who came near Fairmeadows, who did not seem, in the first half-hour, to know his fate, and to yield to it.”

And so in truth it was. Helen’s first conquest, however—the family physician—was not a thing to be very proud of: for that worthy, a tall, spare, neat man, with a *crying* voice, and an interminably prosy delivery, as regularly added another to his list of refusals, as he was called in to a new lady patient; and it was even said, that in his precipitancy, he, the most precise of his sex, had thrice ignorantly thrown himself at the feet of married women. Her second was an old comrade of Sir George Harden’s, for whom Alicia had screamed songs about “England’s glory,” till her throat was sore, and had strained her eyes till they ached in following the hieroglyphics clumsily scrawled upon paper for the enlightenment of the young ladies, which he was pleased to designate plans of campaigns: but Captain Wentworth was a *bon parti*. Him Helen had always avoided as much as possible;—there were things which he said that drove the blood to her heart, as with the force of a thunderbolt,—names pronounced by him carelessly, which awakened all the *agonies* of memory. She shrunk from him with fear: and perhaps it was this very shrinking which was found attractive, for one day, to her unspeakable surprise—almost to her terror—he laid his hand, heart, and honours at her feet. Her answer was decisive beyond the possibility of appeal, and the Captain departed from Fairmeadows immediately, leaving Miss Harden’s voice

and eyes to recover themselves as they best might, and her mother to declare "that it was really *too* much to look forward to, if Miss Lagarde was to go on playing the scarecrow, and driving all their pleasant men from Fairmeadows!" Fortunately, Sir George Harden heard this malicious speech. He was an absolute man, and the comments he made upon it were such as to compel his lady thenceforth to confine her gall (all the bitterer for its imprisonment) to the silence and solitude of her own breast.

Of the other matrimonial offers which established poor Helen's reputation for magnetism, little need be said. Both of them were made in sober seriousness, by men of worth and wealth. To neither had Helen extended the least encouragement. Even in her dress she did not do herself the commonest justice; it was plain, shrouding, unstudied. She rarely spoke in general society; and she had been for six weeks an inmate of Fairmeadows, before Lucy found out that she could sing as few Englishwomen can sing, and that her command over the pencil amounted to mastery. On these discoveries, Alicia vented the sneer of "professionally educated!" No—Helen walked the world with a preoccupied mind: her thoughts were in one spot, her heart was with her memories; and it spoke well for her sweetness of temper, that thus absorbed by one great sorrow, she betrayed no impatience to the things of daily life—no resentment to the ill-veiled dislike with which she was regarded by her aunt and cousin. Sometimes, 'tis true, she would comfort herself with whispering, "It is but for a time."

From what has been said, then, it will be seen that Helen but *endured* her residence at Fairmeadows. There was one spot, however, in its extensive and beautiful grounds which was very dear to her—a pile of ancient ruins at the southern extremity of the park. Here, by the side of a small mere, under the shelter of warm and wooded slopes, a religious house of some magnificence had once stood, and the Catholics residing in the neighbourhood still buried their dead in the quiet and moss-grown cemetery attached to the now wholly ruined church. The scene was not remarkably picturesque; Lady Har-

den, indeed, had often begged her husband to pull down "that old rubbish." But it suited the temper of the mourner's mind; she loved to listen to the grieving sound of the wind, as it swept through the long, lancet arches, and to watch the motions of the birds that had made nests in the ivy, with which much of the stone-work was mantled. She loved, too, to spell out the inscriptions upon the older tombs, and she longed to sleep there also, when her last hour came. She would spend many hours at a time alone, rambling and resting among these decaying remains; sometimes, by chance, and unconsciously, breaking out into some fragment of old song, such as this:

"The rain drops heavy in the brook,  
The wind goes wailing through the wood,  
The sun with angry farewell look  
Set in a stormy sea of blood;  
The lightning flashes wide and bright.  
I must away—Good night, good night!"

"Now stay, tired lady—go not yet,  
Nor breast so wild a storm alone;  
The fire is trimm'd, the board is set,  
And we shall grieve when thou art gone:  
And dreary is the moorland track,  
Then tarry but till morn comes back."

She heeded not; with mournful smile  
She donn'd her wanderer's cloak and shoon:  
Her home was distant many a mile,  
No star came out, nor guiding moon.  
They watch'd her weeping from the door,  
But O! they saw her face no more!

But Helen's pleasure in this sequestered haunt was brought to an end by the accidental discovery which she made one day, that she had not sung without a listener. It is true, that the gentleman whom her quick eye detected stealing among the ruins, appeared, by the pains he took to conceal his retreat, as anxious to avoid observation as she was;—but the privacy of the place was destroyed to her, and she visited it no more.

"I cannot make this Helen out, can you, Alicia? Four

unexceptionable offers, and not one of them so much as listened to!"

"Perhaps, mamma," returned her amiable daughter drily, "she is reserving herself for Lord Calder."

How easy and pleasant it is to assign motives for the conduct of our neighbours, when we gather them, unconsciously, from our own hearts !

That month of all months which has a right to complain of its character, "the gloomy month of November, when Englishmen hang and drown themselves," came, and came gaily, as far as Fairmeadows was concerned. It brought all the charm, and stir, and hurry of a contested election to the neighbouring market town, and it brought a gay party of guests to the mansion-house, one of whom only need be particularized—the much-talked of, much-observed, much desired Lord Calder.

It is amusing to see how people *will* sometimes, with desperate perseverance, insist upon making a lion of an animal too stupid to cut the commonest caper, too feeble even to make his voice heard in the crowd—upon dubbing him a hero who would die of fright at the bare thought of winning his spurs. Most persons who had seen Lord Calder, with his unmarked features, his plain manners, his unornamented dress, would have smiled at his being made the object of a sensation ; but he was so, nevertheless, at Fairmeadows. The spell of his twenty thousand a-year did more than its usual work, and he was a wit, and the handsomest—no, the most distinguished looking of his sex—a Solon *redivivus* for wisdom ; and as for taste, who dared admire, when he had once uttered his simple "I don't like it?"—Certainly neither Lady Harden nor her eldest daughter.

But though outwardly so wholly "without mark," Lord Calder was not quite a common character. He was eminently upright and direct, without making any parade of his independence ; a keen and close observer, because he rarely talked ; a man of great and gentlemanly delicacy of mind, in spite of his almost abrupt manners ; and many a drawing-room lounger, skilled in the art of wrapping up his *no-thoughts* in the choicest otto of Euphuism (forgive

the conceit), shrunk away silenced when he entered a room, to whisper in some corner his wonder "what was it that made Calder so deuced odd a fellow."

Well, not to linger over my tale, there was a grand ball given at Fairmeadows in honour of his lordship, within a week of his arrival—a ball for him who shared the masculine aversion to dancing and "playing the agreeable" in a more than common measure! The guests had been selected with a most rigorous attention to exclusiveness; odd men and old women had been omitted in Lady Harden's invitations with a callousness which did her credit, the suite of rooms—and an elegant suite it was—was brilliantly lighted; the orchestra had been summoned from London; the night, in short, was to be one of success and triumph. As for Alicia Harden, to describe the forethought she had taken about her dress, would be to fill pages most unprofitably; suffice it to say, that first her glass, and then her mother assured her that the result was all that could be desired. She looked *piquant, spirituelle*, brilliant in no ordinary degree; it was useless to attempt beauty, and she wisely forbore.

But where was Lord Calder? Alicia, as she had studied her toilet for him, and him alone, (mistaken girl!) was naturally anxious to prove its effect. Where could he be? Not in the reception room,—for he shrunk from being paraded as the great man of the party, and he was not sure of Lady Harden's forbearance; not in the ball-room,—nor yet in the library among the sober and chess-playing few. There was a small antechamber, half boudoir, half conservatory, which formed a passage between the ball-room and the supper-room, and here, after much search, the truant was discovered, in most vexatiously close conversation with Helen Lagarde!

"Do not disturb them," whispered Lucy, who arrived at the same spot at the same moment; "you see they are most pleasantly engaged; do not hinder what you cannot help."

If a look could kill . . . . but Miss Harden controlled her face, and presented herself to the absorbed pair, heedless that she was interrupting a most interesting conversation.

"Lord Calder, you will dance, will you not?"

He bowed. "If this lady," slightly turning towards Helen, "will do me the honour."

Helen would have refused, but a whisper, that upon her compliance depended his sitting out all the evening, decided her to break her resolution. She knew, though she could not help it, that she was already an object of sarcastic jealousy, a cause of extreme vexation, on account of Lord Calder.

Poor girl! how little was she understood by her severe relations. It was only the wish to give no occasion to the constant innuendo of sharpened tongues, that had induced her to do violence to her feelings, by once again appearing in a scene of gaiety; it was only to escape from that bitter word "affectation," that she had dressed a little more than usual on the evening in question. And even then, when she had completed her toilet, by throwing a rich black lace mantilla over her neck and shoulders (the guests, I should have said, were expected to appear in costume), she had fallen into a reverie of self-reproach for allowing herself to be led back again to the portals of a world in which she had no longer any part. "This is wicked and self-tormenting," at length she murmured, rising and laying aside the book she had never opened. "He knows whether or not I can forget!"

And if she had listened to Lord Calder with a deep and rapt attention, she was wholly guiltless of a wish to attract his love. But he had been feeding her active and almost diseased imagination with such strange and grave talk as rarely enters the precincts of a ball-room: he had been describing to her those mysterious Arabian magicians, who by their spells can call into presence the shadows of the absent and the dead, and describe their personal appearance with an almost fearful accuracy—who can command dreams by the might of their mysterious preparations, and Helen had listened,—time, and place, and speaker all forgotten,—till roused to the recollection of the *decorums* round her by the keen voice, and keener eyes of her cousin. It was with much humility and a little abstraction (for her vision had not wholly faded away) that she prepared to join the ~~dancers~~.

"It is to be a waltz and not a quadrille," said Lord Calder, as they threaded their way through the crowd. In the days of my tale, it will be remembered that the waltz was an exotic in England; it would be almost worth while to vary its sombreness by a few rambling remembrances of the humours which attended the introduction of this *suspected* dance into country ball-rooms.

"O, then,"—said Helen, shrinking from the idea of exhibition and comment, "I must beg you to excuse me; my cousin Alicia waltzes beautifully."

But Lord Calder had not heard her, and scarcely allowing her the power of further remonstrance, led her to her place. Ere she could speak again, the orchestra began to play one of those joyous, floating melodies, the very essence of gaiety and elegance, and of the poetry of motion, which so far surpass all other dance music, and seem to exercise a fascination over the most untuneful ears and lamest feet. On Helen, however, its effect was far different: she checked, the wild exclamations—*the name*, which that well remembered melody called to her lip. She pressed her hand to her heart, which throbbed so high that it seemed as if another pulsation must be its last; and faint—dizzy—scarcely knowing what she did or said, gasped out, "I must sit down, I must go!" From that moment she remembered nothing till she found herself alone in her own chamber—what a blessing, alone!

"I am punished—I am warned," said she, in a feeble voice; "why did I dissemble? why attempt to be as I shall never be again?" and then she stopped her ears, for some tones of that too piercing music would make their way to her chamber, and a thousand strange and confused thoughts floated across her brain. The magicians of whom Lord Calder had told, himself, and one or two of the fantastic groups of the ball-room, mingled with old, and dear, and familiar faces; she thought that voices spoke to her from the midst of the flourishes of the harp and horn, which ever and anon came merrily upon her ear—she mistook the dull, whirling sound of feet below for well known steps on her chamber floor; and when, ten minutes later, the kind-hearted Lucy entered, all

tears and sympathy, her unfortunate cousin was rapidly approaching a state of feverish delirium.

I wish that, together with the portrait of Helen Lagarde, as she appeared on the memorable evening of the ball at Fairmeadows, I could show her as she sat in her chamber on New Year's eve, propped in a large, white, easy chair, with the fire-light, as it flickered up, faintly showing the more than beautiful sweetness of her poor, wasted features, now, alas ! more colourless than the pillows which supported her head ; or than the ample white dressing gown which veiled the ravages disease had wrought upon her figure. She should have been drawn at the moment when she fixed her eyes affectionately upon her faithful nurse and comforter, Lucy, who entered in a quiet evening dress ; for, according to the custom of Fairmeadows, there was always a gay revel held in the mansion on the last night of the year.

"I don't like your dress, Lucy," said Helen, with a passing gaiety of tone which had not been heard in her voice for many a day, "you want some ornaments ; that simple nun-like style does not suit you—does not set you off. Come, I will be a good fairy, and you shall be my wand, and having unlocked the third drawer in my cabinet, shall bring hither to me a certain cedar box."

Lucy obeyed ; and the lap of the invalid was presently glittering with brilliant jewellery.

"There, my love—stoop, that I may put it on for you myself—is a necklace, and here are bracelets, and ear-rings, and a *sevigne* : you will value them for my sake."

"But, indeed, Helen, I cannot—will not indeed. . . ."

"Nay, love, they are for you ; I shall never wear them more. Don't cry, my Lucy ; you must think of me pleasantly, not sadly, whenever you put them on. You must think of me as your odd cousin, who kept her ornaments as close hidden as her secrets. Now that I have given you the one, Lucy, I will give you the other ; yes, *all* !—it is for the first and last time. Sit down—you have half an hour, have you not, before the people come ?—and I will tell you my story ?

Poor Lucy, though grieving rather than rejoicing in the magnificence of her cousin's gift, yet almost breathless with curiosity and interest, obeyed; and the long hoarded sorrow was unfolded to her. It is needless to make it more fragmentary, by giving it with the few interruptions and questions caused by Lucy's intense wish to lose not a syllable of the tale.

" You think me odd, Lucy, that I should call upon you thus suddenly to listen to what I have hitherto concealed from you; and you thought me odd when I refused that excellent Lord Calder—a husband for you, my Lucy, some day or other, I would fondly hope. But it was always so. I *was* always strange, reserved, perhaps capricious, from the day when I was born. Now I feel as if I *must* speak. I should not like to pass away—nay, dearest it is so, for I *am* going, and, by God's mercy, quickly and easily—and be misunderstood by you, Lucy,—so patient as you have been with me!

" You know the story of my mother's first marriage, but you never saw her, I think; and if I speak of her character freely, it is only, Heaven knows, to show you mine freely. My father left her a young widow, with a handsome fortune; and I was to be brought up, for vanity and display, to be shown about by her as an ornament, as soon as her own youth and beauty faded. Let me not be severe: I have said enough to explain to you on what principles they educated me. But God gave me a mind on which their system worked in vain. I never loved show and gaiety; and by being dragged into it ceaselessly, as soon as I ceased to be a school-girl, learned to hate it all the more. And, then, I was shocked by overhearing it severely commented upon in Paris, where we lived—my being *exhibited*—yes, *exhibited* so much and so long, before I was married (you know it is not their custom). Heaven knows, this was not my poor mother's fault, at least; I was stubborn and fastidious, and refused . . . . I might have known how I was to be blessed!

" Well, we went on in this way for a long, weary time, ill at ease with each other, I graver each year than the last; she, gayer, sonder of society the noisiest, most

heartless. At last I was given up as hopeless, allowed to stay away from crowded balls and stupid *soirées*, when I pleased ; allowed to bury myself with a book at home, when the rest of the world was out and abroad ; pronounced an "odd girl," in every tone of vexation and despair, till they wearied themselves into silence, and I was as happy as any creature could be who lives alone with his thoughts.

Then came a time—*the* time, Lucy !—I almost fear to speak of it—but I met, in the most common-place manner possible, at the house of a friend . . . I could talk for ever, and never say half enough. *You* know not what it is to have a restless, aspiring, unquiet spirit, bruised and wounded daily,—and then to find a shelter, a protector ; one that understands you, and thinks of you, and thinks *for* you, and enters into all your day-dreams, and loves them for your sake, and bears with reproach, and neglect, and misunderstanding—and a *man*, too, as well as a lover—as fearless as he was gentle,—generous, beautiful, devoted . . . .

" He was a soldier; Lucy, an Englishman ; yes, to be sure, none but my country has such sons; and it, but *one* such ;—so brave, so tender ! I can speak of him to-night without pain—with pride. There have been times when the sound of his name (do you remember when Captain Wentworth was here ?) has made me shiver ready to die. God knows that I was not ungrateful for the blessing of such a true heart to rest upon. I am proud of having been permitted to love him ; and I trust and hope, that where he is, there is a place for me at his side !

" It was long ere my mother would hear of it ; and when she saw I was firm, and would not relinquish my affection—I cannot, if I would, tell you how it grew, but it was no thing of a summer's day—it was longer before she would receive him with any decent courtesy. She had set her heart so upon seeing me a countess ! But he bore with her humours as if he did not notice them—he, as keen sighted as a hawk. Well it is now all past and gone ; but I cannot bear to think of those days—dear, happy days, though, some of them were—when we were left to ourselves, and he would sit and read to me for

hours, as if he had not been a strong man and a soldier, and he would calm my angry spirit as if I had been a child—and talk of the future—glorious palaces in air we built ! When I have seen other men since, and measured them with him . . . . O Lucy ! there was never such another !

“ We were to be married—we should have been married, but for the sudden change made in everything, in France, by Buonaparte’s return from Elba. Frederick was, of course, obliged to join his regiment. O, that first parting ! I *knew*, as I held him in my arms, as I leant on his shoulder, that my hopes were destroyed for ever—that we should never meet again as we had met. I bore up, however, while he was with me, but I sunk,—how I sunk !—when I lost the last glimpse of his plume, and could not catch the sound of his horse’s feet any longer. And my mother,—she had begun to love him too, and showed her anxiety, now that he was gone, by her irritability—upbraided me with my depression. ‘ A fit wife for a soldier !’ she would say. Alas ! I had nothing of the hero in my composition.

“ We met again once more, God be thanked ! in Brussels, just before the battle of Waterloo. We were at the ball together, when the dreadful news came. I think I never loved him so well, never enjoyed his society so much, as in the few brief hours we then spent together. I remember every look, every word ; and we danced together—that *very waltz*, Lucy :—you now know why the hearing of it nearly killed me. And this was our last, last meeting, save on the death-bed, and by the grave. How the parting went over, I forget ;—there was the hurry, and the excitement, and the holding up of the spirit, sick with fear, that he might not see me sad. He went—it is like a dream !—and the next days are like a dream, too. O ! to listen to the firing, and to know that he was in the midst of it, and breathlessly to wait for the promised message, which came not ;—and to feel as if time would never go over, and tidings never come ;—and to see our daily meals brought in, and night come on, as usual,—and to gather up greedily any street-whisper,—and to go and ask the poorest, most unlike-

ly people, for their news, in the desperate hope of finding the comfort of words,—and to cling to that comfort . . . .

“ It came, at last it came !—I was sitting alone, the day but one after the battle, *sure*, that the worst had happened, for that, had he been alive, he would have written to me, sent—I was sitting alone, in a darkened room, half stupefied, half sleeping, I believe, for I had not closed my eyes for three nights. On a sudden I heard wheels in the street; *I knew they came to me*, and I covered my face, and tried to pray—I was right; there was a low knock at the door, and then the dull, huddling sound of feet, below first, and then ascending the stairs, and one voice, above the rest, giving directions. I fixed my eyes on my chamber door, expecting it would open; but the *feet passed it*, and I heard a voice say, ‘ he does not know where he is.’ He was alive then ! alive ! and under our roof ! I sprung up from the bed upon which I had flung myself, and restraining myself with a force not my own, crept softly towards the chamber to which they had borne him. I grew deadly sick on the threshold; but at last I mustered up my strength, and went in ! ”

“ The sight which I saw !—Merciful heaven ! that it could be *he* !—that maimed, broken, pale, bleeding . . . .

“ I sat beside him all the night; his hand in mine; and I wiped his brow to the last, and I moistened his lips. He once called me by my name; and I knew when those dreadful pangs had seized him, for then he drew his hand away, lest he should clench it suddenly and hurt me. My mother had been carried to bed in violent hysterics.

“ It was when the dawn of morning was beginning to make the watchlight look red and sickly, that I felt the hand in mine grow cold, and the dew thicken on his brow; he was asleep, I thought; for, fool that I was ! I hoped to the last ! He *was* asleep;—but it was the sleep of death ! ”

She paused for awhile, exhausted by the vehemence with which she had spoken; and the two were silent, for Lucy’s tears were flowing too fast to permit her to speak.

" You know the rest," resumed Helen, yet more feebly than before—" how my mother chose, within a fortnight after we laid *him* cold in the grave, to marry a Russian officer, young enough to be her son ; to accompany him to St. Petersburg, and to abandon me in Paris ; she said I might go and live *en pension*. You know, too, how by blessed chance my dear uncle found me out ; and now you may know what have been my feelings since I have been here. *I* listen to love tales, when my heart was yearning for the dead ! Why, on that very evening when lord Calder sat talking in the ante-room about some charm *which should command dreams*, when Alicia interrupted us, you may remember, I was thinking, in the superstition of my misery, of the possibility . . . . for though I have prayed and longed, and implored heaven to grant that *one* prayer, and let me look upon him again, if only in my sleep, I never dreamed of him till last night. I could not have spoken of him if I had not seen him—if he had not promised me . . . . I could not have told you my tale. And now, dearest, dry your eyes. You must go down—nay, indeed you must, or my aunt will be displeased. I have told you all, for my own relief, and not to distress you ; and you must think of me, when I am gone, hopefully and cheerfully. Nay, I will say no more, then ; but, indeed, I had better—I *would rather* be left for a while ; I have wearied myself with talking. Good night, my love, heaven bless you, and send you a happy new year!"

\* \* \* \* \*

Towards midnight the faithful girl, whose heart had never left her cousin's side for a moment, stole up to her chamber, heedless of the sneers of her mother and sister, who felt reproached by her affection for their inmate, and were provoked by the sight of her splendid ornaments to insinuate that " Lucy knew what she was about"—" No bad thing to humour a hypochondriac who had a jewel box at her elbow—for those who could stoop to it"—and the like.

Helen was still seated in the easy chair, just as Lucy had left her ; for her attendant was sharing in the festivi-

ties of the evening, and at her last visit had been dismissed with an injunction not to come again till after midnight. But a glance assured the trembling and apprehensive girl, that the stillness of the invalid was not the quiet of sleep. The weary one was, indeed, at rest for ever, with a smile on her face, that told of a tranquil and joyful departure. In her hand (and she was buried thus) was found a small miniature of a young officer, the face full of life, spirit, and beauty; at the back of this miniature were two locks of hair and a faded myrtle leaf, and the words, traced in silver—

“ Frederick Ancram to Helen Lagarde,  
“ given to her on his and her  
“ twenty-first birth-day.”

## THE PARVENU.

BY MRS. SHELLEY.

WHY do I write my melancholy story? Is it as a lesson, to prevent any other from wishing to rise to rank superior to that in which they are born? No! miserable as I am, others might have been happy, I doubt not, in my position: the chalice has been poisoned for me alone! Am I evil-minded—am I wicked? What have been my errors, that I am now an outcast and a wretch? I will tell my story—let others judge me; my mind is bewildered, I cannot judge myself.

My father was a land steward to a wealthy nobleman. He married young, and had several children. He then lost his wife, and remained fifteen years a widower, when he married again a young girl, the daughter of a clergyman, who died, leaving a numerous offspring in extreme poverty. My maternal grandfather had been a man of sensibility and genius; my mother inherited many of his endowments. She was an earthly angel; all her works were charity, all her thoughts were love.

Within a year after her marriage, she gave birth to twins—I and my sister; soon after she fell into ill-health, and from that time was always weakly. She could endure no fatigue, and seldom moved from her chair. I see her now; her white, delicate hands employed in needle-work, her soft, love-lighted eyes fixed on me. I was still a child when my father fell into trouble, and we removed from the part of the country where we had hitherto lived, and went to a distant village, where we rented a cottage, with a little land adjoining. We were poor, and all the family assisted each other. My elder half sisters were strong, industrious, rustic young women, and submitted

to a life of labour with great cheerfulness. My father held the plough, my half brothers worked in the barns; all was toil, yet all seemed enjoyment.

How happy my childhood was! Hand in hand with my dear twin sister, I plucked the spring flowers in the hedges, turned the hay in the summer meadows, shook the apples from the trees in the autumn, and at all seasons, gambolled in delicious liberty beneath the free air of heaven; or at my mother's feet, caressed by her, I was taught the sweetest lessons of charity and love. My elder sisters were kind; we were all linked by strong affection. The delicate, fragile existence of my mother gave an interest to our monotony, while her virtues and her refinement threw a grace over our homely household.

I and my sister did not seem twins, we were so unlike. She was robust, chubby, full of life and spirits; I, tall, slim, fair, and even pale. I loved to play with her, but soon grew tired, and then I crept to my mother's side, and she sang me to sleep, and nursed me in her bosom, and looked on me with her own angelic smile. She took pains to instruct me, not in accomplishments, but in all real knowledge. She unfolded to me the wonders of the visible creation, and to each tale of bird and beast, of fiery mountain or vast river, was appended some moral, derived from her warm heart and ardent imagination. Above all, she impressed upon me the precepts of the gospel, charity to every fellow-creature, the brotherhood of mankind, the rights that every sentient creature possesses to our services alone. I was her almoner; for, poor as she was, she was the benefactress of those who were poorer. Being delicate, I helped her in her task of needle-work, while my sister aided the rest in their household or rustic labours.

When I was seventeen, a miserable accident happened. A hayrick caught fire; it communicated to our outhouses, and at last to the cottage. We were roused from our beds at midnight, and escaped barely with our lives. My father bore out my mother in his arms, and then tried to save a portion of his property. The roof of the cottage fell in on him. He was dug out after an hour, scorched, maimed, crippled for life.

We were all saved, but by a miracle only was I preserved. I and my sister were awoke by cries of fire. The cottage was already enveloped in flames. Susan, with her accustomed intrepidity, rushed through the flames, and escaped; I thought only of my mother, and hurried to her room. The fire raged around me; it encircled—hemmed me in. I believed that I must die, when suddenly I felt myself seized upon and borne away. I looked on my preserver—it was Lord Reginald Desborough.

For many Sundays past, when at church, I knew that Lord Reginald's eyes were fixed on me. He had met me and Susan in our walks; he had called at our cottage. There was fascination in his eye, in his soft voice and earnest gaze, and my heart throbbed with gladness, as I thought that he surely loved me. To have been saved by him, was to make the boon of life doubly precious.

There is too much obscurity in this part of my story. Lord Reginald loved me, it is true; why he loved me, so far as to forget pride of rank and ambition for my sake, he who afterwards showed no tendency to disregard the prejudices and habits of rank and wealth, I cannot tell; it seems strange. He had loved me before, but from the hour that he saved my life, love grew into an overpowering passion. He offered us a lodge on his estate to take refuge in; and while there he sent us presents of game, and still more kindly, fruits and flowers to my mother, and came himself, especially when all were out except my mother and myself, and sat by us and conversed. Soon I learnt to expect the soft asking look of his eyes, and almost dared answer it. My mother once perceived these glances, and took an opportunity to appeal to Lord Reginald's good feelings, not to make me miserable for life, by implanting an attachment that could only be productive of unhappiness. His answer was to ask me in marriage.

I need not say that my mother gratefully consented—that my father, confined to his bed since the fire, thanked God with rapture; that my sisters were transported by delight: I was the least surprised then, though the most happy. Now, I wonder much, what could he see in me? So many girls of rank and fortune were prettier. I was

an untaught, low-born, portionless girl. It was very strange.

Then I only thought of the happiness of marrying him, of being loved, of passing my life with him. My wedding day was fixed. Lord Reginald had neither father nor mother to interfere with his arrangements. He told no relation; he became one of our family during the interval. He saw no deficiencies in our mode of life—in my dress: he was satisfied with all; he was tender, assiduous, and kind, even to my eldest sisters; he seemed to adore my mother, and became a brother to my sister Susan. She was in love, and asked him to intercede to gain her parent's consent for her choice. He did so; and though before, Lawrence Cooper, the carpenter of the place, had been disdained, supported by him, he was accepted. Lawrence Cooper was young, well-looking, well disposed, and fondly attached to Susan.

My wedding-day came. My mother kissed me fondly, my father blessed me with pride and joy, my sisters stood round, radiant with delight. There was but one drawback to the universal happiness—that immediately on my marriage, I was to go abroad.

From the church door I stepped into the carriage. Having once and again been folded in my dear mother's embrace, the wheels were in motion, and we were away. I looked out from the window; there was the dear group; my old father, white-headed and aged, in his large chair, my mother, smiling through her tears, with folded hands and upraised looks of gratitude, anticipating long years of happiness for her grateful Fanny; Susan and Lawrence standing side by side, unenvious of my greatness, happy in themselves; my sisters conning over with pride and joy the presents made to them, and the prosperity that flowed in from my husband's generosity. All looked happy, and it seemed as if I were the cause of all this happiness. We had been indeed saved from dreadful evils; ruin had ensued from the fire, and we had been sunk in adversity through that very event from which our good fortune took its rise. I felt proud and glad. I loved them all. I thought, I make them happy—they are pros-

perous through me! And my heart warmed with gratitude towards my husband at the idea.

We spent two years abroad. It was rather lonely for me, who had always been surrounded, as it were, by a populous world of my own, to find myself cast upon foreigners and strangers; the habits of the different sexes in the higher ranks so separate them from each other, that after a few months, I spent much of my time in solitude. I did not repine; I had been brought up to look upon the hard visage of life, if not unflinchingly, at least with resignation. I did not expect perfect happiness. Marriages in humble life are attended with as much care. I had none of this: my husband loved me; and though I often longed to see the dear familiar faces that thronged my childhood's home, and, above all, I pined for my mother's caresses and her wise maternal lessons, yet for a time I was content to think of them, and hope for a reunion, and to acquiesce in the present separation.

Still many things pained me: I had, poor myself, been brought up among the poor, and nothing, since I can remember forming an idea, so much astonished and jarred with my feelings, as the thought of how the rich could spend so much on themselves, while any one of their fellow-creatures were in destitution. I had none of the patrician charity (though such is praiseworthy), which consists in distributing thin soup and coarse flannel petticoats—a sort of instinct or sentiment of justice, the offspring of my lowly paternal hearth, and my mother's enlightened piety was deeply implanted in my mind, that all had as good a right to the comforts of life as myself, or even as my husband. My charities, they were called—they seemed to me the payment of my debts to my fellow-creatures—were abundant. Lord Reginald peremptorily checked them; but as I had a large allowance for my own expenses, I denied myself a thousand luxuries to which it appeared to me I had no right, for the sake of feeding the hungry. Nor was it only that charity impelled me, but that I could not acquire a taste for spending money on myself—I disliked the apparatus of wealth. My husband called my ideas sordid, and reproved me severely, when, instead of outshining all competitors at a

fête, I appeared dowdily dressed, and declared warmly that I could not, I would not, spend twenty guineas on a gown, while I could dress so many sad faces in smiles, and bring so much joy to so many drooping hearts by the same sum.

Was I right? I firmly believe that there is not one among the rich who will not affirm that I did wrong; that to please my husband and to do honour to his rank, was my first duty. Yet, shall I confess it? even now, rendered miserable by this fault—I cannot give it that name—I can call it a misfortune—it is such to be consumed at the stake a martyr for one's faith. Do not think me presumptuous in this simile; for many years I have wasted at the slow fire of knowing that I lost my husband's affections because I performed what I believed to be a duty.

But I am not come to that yet. It was not till my return to England that the full disaster crushed me. We had often been applied to for money by my family, and Lord Reginald had acceded to nearly all their requests. When we reached London after two years' absence, my first wish was to see my dear mother. She was at Margate for her health. It was agreed that I should go there alone, and pay a short visit. Before I went, Lord Reginald told me what I did not know before, that my family had often made exorbitant demands on him, with which he was resolved not to comply. He told me that he had no wish to raise my relatives from their station in society; and that, indeed, there were only two among them whom he conceived had any claims upon me—my mother and my twin sister: that the former was incapable of any improper request, and the latter, by marrying Cooper, had fixed her own position, and could in no way be raised from the rank of her chosen husband. I agreed to much that he said. I replied that he well knew that my own taste led me to consider mediocrity the best and happiest situation; that I had no wish, and would never consent, to supply any extravagant demands on the part of persons, however dear to me, whose circumstances he had rendered easy.

Satisfied with my reply, we parted most affectionately, and I went on my way to Margate with a light and glad

heart ; and the cordial reception I received from my whole family collected together to receive me, was calculated to add to my satisfaction. The only drawback to my content was my mother's state ; she was wasted to a shadow. They all talked and laughed around her, but it was evident to me that she had not long to live.

There was no room for me in the small furnished house in which they were all crowded, so I remained at the hotel. Early in the morning before I was up, my father visited me. He begged me to intercede with my husband ; that on the strength of his support he had embarked in a speculation which required a large capital ; that many families would be ruined, and himself dishonoured, if a few hundreds were not advanced. I promised to do what I could, resolving to ask my mother's advice, and make her my guide. My father kissed me with an effusion of gratitude, and left me.

I cannot enter into the whole of these sad details ; all my half brothers and sisters had married, and trusted to their success in life to Lord Reginald's assistance. Each evidently thought that they asked little in not demanding an equal share of my luxuries and fortunes ; but they were all in difficulty—all needed large assistance—all depended on me.

Lastly, my own sister Susan appealed to me—but hers was the most moderate request of all—she only wished for twenty pounds. I gave it her at once from my own purse.

As soon as I saw my mother I explained to her my difficulties. She told me that she expected this, and that it broke her heart : I must summon courage and resist these demands. That my father's imprudence had ruined him, and that he must encounter the evil he had brought on himself ; that my numerous relatives were absolutely mad with the notion of what I ought to do for them. I listened with grief—I saw the torments in store for me—I felt my own weakness, and knew that I could not meet the rapacity of those about me with any courage or firmness. That same night my mother fell into convulsions ; her life was saved with difficulty. From Susan I learned the cause of her attack. She had had a violent

altercation with my father : she insisted that I should not be appealed to ; while he reproached her for rendering me undutiful, and bringing ruin and disgrace on his gray hairs. When I saw my pale mother trembling, fainting, dying—when I was again and again assured that she must be my father's victim unless I yielded, what wonder that, in the agony of my distress, I wrote to my husband to implore his assistance.

O ! what thick clouds now obscured my destiny ! how do I remember, with a sort of thrilling horror, the boundless sea, white cliffs, and wide sands of Margate. The summer day that had welcomed my arrival changed to bleak wintry weather during this interval—while I waited with anguish for my husband's answer. Well do I remember the evening on which it came : the waves of the sea showed their white crests, no vessel ventured to meet the gale with any canvass except a topsail, the sky was bared clear by the wind, the sun was going down fiery red. I looked upon the troubled waters—I longed to be borne away upon them, away from care and misery. At this moment a servant followed me to the sands with my husband's answer, it contained a refusal. I dared not communicate it. The menaces of bankruptcy ; the knowledge that he had instilled false hopes into so many ; the fears of disgrace, rendered my father, always rough, absolutely ferocious. Life flickered in my dear mother's frame, it seemed on the point of expiring when she heard my father's step ; if he came in with a smooth brow, her pale lips wreathed into her own sweet smile, and a delicate pink tinged her fallen cheeks ; if he scowled, and his voice was high, every limb shivered, she turned her face to her pillow, while convulsive tears shook her frame, and threatened instant dissolution. My father sought me alone one day, as I was walking in melancholy guise, upon the sands, he swore that he would not survive his disgrace ; "And do you think, Fanny," he added, "that your mother will survive the knowledge of my miserable end ?" I saw the resolution of despair in his face as he spoke. I asked the sum needed, the time when it must be given. A

thousand pounds in two days was all that was asked. I set off to London to implore my husband to give this sum.

No! no! I cannot step by step record my wretchedness—the money was given—I extorted it from Lord Reginald, though I saw his very heart closed on me as he wrote the cheque. Worse had happened since I had left him. Susan had used the twenty pounds I gave her to reach town, to throw herself at my husband's feet, and implore his compassion. Rendered absolutely insane by the idea of having a lord for a brother-in-law, Cooper had launched into a system of extravagance, incredible as it was wicked. He was many thousand pounds in debt, and when at last Lord Reginald wrote to refuse all further supply, the miserable man committed forgery. Two hundred pounds prevented exposure, and preserved him from an ignominious end. Five hundred more were advanced to send him and his wife to America, to settle there, out of the way of temptation. I parted from my dear sister, I loved her fondly; she had no part in her husband's guilt, yet she was still attached to him, and her child bound them together; they went into solitary, miserable exile. "Ah! had we remained in virtuous poverty," cried my broken-hearted sister, "I had not been forced to leave my dying mother."

The thousand pounds given to my father was but a drop of water in the ocean. Again I was appealed to; again I felt the slender thread of my mother's life depended on my getting a supply. Again, trembling and miserable, I implored the charity of my husband.

"I am content," he said, "to do what you ask, to do more than you ask;—but remember the price you pay—either give up your parents and your family, whose rapacity and crimes deserve no mercy, or we part for ever. You shall have a proper allowance; you can maintain all your family on it if you please; but their names must never be mentioned to me again. Choose between us, Fanny—you never see them more, or we part for ever."

Did I do right—I cannot tell—misery is the result—

misery frightful, endless, unredeemed. My mother was dearer to me than all the world—my heart revolted from my husband's selfishness. I did not reply—I rushed to my room, and that night in a sort of delirium of grief and horror, at my being asked never again to see my mother, I set out for Margate—such was my reply to my husband.

Three years have passed since then; for these three I preserved my mother, and during ~~all~~ this time I was grateful to heaven for being permitted to do my duty by her, and though I wept over the alienation of my cruel husband, I did not repent. But she, my angelic support, is no more. My father survived my mother but two months; remorse for all he had done and made me suffer, cut short his life. His family by his first wife are gathered round me, they importune, they rob, they destroy me. Last week I wrote to Lord Reginald. I communicated the death of my parents; I represented that my position was altered; that my duties did not now clash; and that if he still cared for his unhappy wife all might be well. Yesterday his answer came. It was too late, he said;—I had myself torn asunder the ties that united us, they never could be knit together again.

By the same post came a letter from Susan. She is happy. Cooper, profiting by the frightful lesson he incurred, awakened to a manly sense of the duties of life, is thoroughly reformed. He is industrious, prosperous, and respectable. Susan asks me to join her. I am resolved to go. O! my native village, and recollections of my youth, to which I sacrificed so much, where are ye now? tainted by pestilence, envenomed by serpents' stings, I long to close my eyes on every scene I have ever viewed. Let me seek a strange land, a land where a grave will soon be opened for me. I feel that I cannot live long—I desire to die. I am told that Lord Reginald loves another, a highborn girl; that he openly curses our union as the obstacle to his happiness. The memory of this will poison the oblivion I go to seek in a distant land. He will be free. Soon will the hand he once so fondly took in his and made his own, which, now flung away, trembles with misery as it traces these lines, moulder in its last decay.

HUNTING *versus* YACHTING.

BY F. P. DELME RADCLIFFE, ESQ.

SOME love to ride on the ocean tide,  
There are charms in "the dark blue sea ;"  
But nerve at need, a gallant steed,  
And the life of a hunter for me.

We plough the deep, or climb the steep,  
With a heart and a hand as brave  
As those who steer their bold career  
Far o'er the foaming wave.

There is that in the sound of horn and hound  
Which leaves all care behind,  
And the huntsman's cheer delights the ear,  
Borne merrily on the wind.

Oh ! give me a place in the stirring chace,  
A dull sky and a southern breeze,  
You may rove in vain o'er the mighty main,  
Ere you find any joys like these.

## THE FANCY BALL.

BY THE HONOURABLE CHARLES PHIPPS.

I DARE say few of my readers have ever visited the little town of Homesgrove ; indeed, unless they had been determined to travel very far out of their road to wherever they were going, or had a second sight of the same it was to acquire through the medium of this eventful tale, it is very improbable that they should have discovered a place which neither Mogg or Patterson have been able to coax into any cross road between Falmouth and Berwick. Unknown, however, as Homesgrove may generally be as yet, and undiscovered by many as it may still remain, I can assure my readers that the interests, consequence, and notoriety of that small, unchartered collection of bricks and mortar appeared to its inhabitants as important and as worthy of attention as those of any city, reformed or unreformed, in the united kingdom. It had its great people, swelling with their own grandeur ; its little people, puffing up to become of consequence ; its select society and its vulgar set ; its aristocrats and republicans ; its geniuses and its men of sense ; its wits and its butts ; in short, an epitome of the whole household stuff of a large metropolis.

Amongst the greatest of the great, and the richest of the rich, was Mr. Leslie, the banker, who, if his wealth was to be estimated by the number of notes in circulation with the design of Leslie Priory engraved in the top left-hand corner, and the autograph of Archibald Leslie written in the diagonal righthand one, must have been more opulent than all his neighbours combined, as all their wealth appeared to consist of his money. Higher still in dignity, and the dispenser of all his wealth, was Mrs. Leslie, the

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mistress of Leslie Priory, and the wife of its proprietor. Of a size that should have ensured the stability of any bank, and a pomposity sufficient to maintain any consequence arising from riches, her broad face, like the reflection in a horizontal tea-spoon, seemed still further to expand with irrepressible good humour, and her magnificence to grow more elated by the repetition of unbounded hospitality. Immeasurable, however, became this amiable expansion of countenance, and profuse almost to extravagance was to be this friendly entertainment of guests upon the 15th of July 1817, when returned to his home the only son, the idolized child of this warm-hearted couple. Fresh from the glories of the late short but eventful campaign of 1815, polished and formed into a perfect *preux chevalier* by a two years' mixture in the society of the French capital, beaming with the beauty, and bursting with the spirits of youth, almost of boyhood, it would have been hardly possible to have imagined an object more formed to justify parental pride than Horace Leslie, the king of the intended feast, the hero who had scarcely numbered eighteen summers.

The long expected day of the projected *fête* at last arrived, hot and calm as could be desired; the sky was uninterrupted blue, the sun unsparingly scorching, and the lawn most thirstily brown. There could not be better weather for the description of *fête*, for it was one of those entertainments upon which you are allowed to remain upon an unshaded, dusty lawn as long as the sun retains its power; and when the evening becomes cool, and the guests are completely tired, you are permitted to rest your limbs and cool your body by dancing in closed apartments, the atmosphere of which is carefully warmed with a profusion of wax candles, and perfumed with a mixture of occasionally expiring oil lamps.

Mrs. Leslie was *about* by nine o'clock. By about, I mean she had been in every room, from the conservatory to the kitchen; in all the tents, the booth for the Bampford pandæans, the temporary cow-house for the syllabubs; had tried the spring of the boards for the village sword dancers, and had paced the exact distance (twice to be quite sure) between the targets for the Homesgrove

Toxopholite Society ; and had seen that the beef and plum pudding was "cutting up" for the country people, who were to dine at twelve ; and the barrel of ale rolled out to a spot where the men could easily walk to it, and stagger from it. Everything was in order ; not a *contretemps*, not a misfortune—except, indeed, that the heat had turned all the cream for the strawberries sour, and the long period for which the ice-house had been open, had converted that cool repository into a cistern of tepid water ; but cream was always to be had in a dairy country, and ice always to be bought in a town like Homesgrove, and thus the *rus in urbe*, or rather *urbs in rure*, removed all grievances.

Mr. Leslie had been at the bank since seven to get his business done by twelve, determined, for that day at least, to stop payment after that hour.

At the door of the mansion, upon that morning, Horace met his mother ; he, bright with the hope of enjoyment, and the enthusiastic affection of an indulged son, she flushed with unwonted exertion, and panting under the weight of flower pots for the entrance hall, and cut flowers to "grow spontaneously" in the jellies and *blanc manges*.

"My own dearest old lady," said the spoiled boy as in his boisterous salute he upset one of the geraniums and half of the hoarded blossoms, destined "sweets to the sweet;" "you look like the effigy on your clock of Summer stealing the flowers of Spring. Thank you for your scattered gifts," continued he, arranging a bouquet, "this will be just the thing to make me welcome. I shall be back by eleven."

"Why, where can you be going this morning, my dear Horace?"

"Where, where but to Binfield, to persuade Colonel Arnot to forget his gout, and despise his velvet shoe, and to bring Helen to the *fête*."

"My dear boy," said Mrs. Leslie, more gravely, "there is no occasion to display such very great anxiety for the presence of Colonel and Miss Arnot, and I must seriously caution you against being caught by that girl's pretty face, for 'you know that they are as poor and as proud as last year's mayor.'"

"Oh, good-by, dear mother," cried Horace, laughing and running away ; " I do not intend to listen to a word against the power of pretty faces for the next three years : and as I am neither going to borrow money nor ask a favour it matters little to me how poor or proud they are."

Now I must in confidence reveal to my readers that this caution against the enslaving authority of beauty, which Horace laughed at as premature, could not, in this instance, be justly accused of any unnecessary precipitancy, on the contrary, it might better have been taunted with being what is called in vulgar diction, "a day after the fair :" for, in fact, Horace and the lovely Helen had long since been aware of, and done full homage to each other's rare personal beauty, and though our hero's age was now eighteen, and nearly two summers less had ripened Helen to the bloom of sixteen, yet must I acknowledge that for some years past it had been thoroughly arranged between them that nature had formed them for each other. I entirely agree with a delightful authoress, that an early affection amongst little children is not so uncommon an event as to be considered a token of the precocity of some extraordinary genius ; I not only believe that such childish preference is very common, but that where the seclusion of the country nurses these early ideas, their effect is often felt through life. This certainly was the case with the two of whom I write. But, indeed, it was hardly to be avoided, that two beings so admirable should be aware of each other's mutual perfections.

I need hardly say that the united persuasions of Helen and Horace were sufficient to induce Colonel Arnot to sally forth from his usual seclusion ; and that among the loveliest of the throng assembled on the lawn of Leslie Priory, none was so much remarked as Helen Arnot. The *fête* was very successful and went off uncommonly well. There were few accidents. The sword dancers, to be sure, having had their share of the good cheer, and their turn at the ale-barrel before they were called upon to enact their pageant, soon allowed their pantomime to rise into a real fight, and were consigned to the charge of the parish beadle ; the toxopholites shot a little boy in the leg, and the cow that was going to assist in the syllabubs ;

but these were trifles where so many gay and joyous hearts were determined to be amused.

"What a delightful day we have passed," said Helen, as she threw her pretty light bonnet on one side, and entered the ball-room with Horace, after having seen the sun set, the moon rise, the fireworks let off, and the variegated lamps grow dim; "what a charming day we have passed! you cannot have seen anything much more delightful than this, Horace, even at Paris."

"Indeed, I was present at no party there," replied Horace, "that I liked one half so much, though I may have seen more brilliant *fêtes*."

"Oh! you must tell me about those splendid scenes, Horace; you promised to describe them all to me; what were they like?"

"Indeed, Helen, there is nothing so difficult as to describe a ball, they are all so similar: the only difference I ever saw, was a few more wax candles, a little better music, and a more luxurious supper. The only very new thing I was present at there was what they call a *bal costumé*. I should like to see you in a fancy dress; how beautiful you would look!"

"How do you know that? perhaps it might change me entirely, and then you might not like——"

"It must be a very complete change to produce such an effect as that, dear Helen; but I do not think you could ever be much changed—at least, I hope not."

"Not towards you, Horace, indeed I could not: you need not fear it. When you do see me in a fancy dress, it may be an outward disguise, but not a change of the heart—be sure of that."

This is all pretty well, our readers will think, for a young gentleman and lady still in their teens; but had any person suggested to either of them that in this conversation they had been making downright serious love, they would have strenuously denied it, and declared that they had said nothing more than usual: and I, for one, believe they would have told truth.

The expression of such sentiments as we have read, continued, however, to be customary in daily reciprocation, in the unfailing ride or walk, until Colonel Arnot,

though always very indulgent, and usually very unobservant, was constrained to remark, that he enjoyed very little of his daughter's society; and considered it to be his duty to inquire whether the enjoyment of that of which he so much lamented the privation, was likely to become advantageous to him upon whom it was so prodigally bestowed.

Colonel Arnot was, as Mrs. Leslie had stated, a very proud man; and this natural failing had been greatly aggravated from the circumstances of his early life, which had induced him to withdraw almost entirely from society. Descended from one of the oldest and most noble families in the kingdom, connected with some of the richest, highly endowed by nature with gifts both personal and of mental ability, he had, by an early and unfortunate marriage, separated himself from his own family, and caused himself to be shunned by his high connexions. He then devoted himself to his profession, but even there finding her whom he adored, looked down upon by the wives of his brother officers for that one offence which, in his mind, was amply atoned for by its having been caused by the violence of her affection for him; and seeing this delicate and repentant creature fading and sinking under the obloquy that she found every where pursue her, Colonel Arnot soon retired from the world; and when, within two years, the poor heart-broken creature sought, in an early grave, that peace and forgiveness that this world had forbidden her to hope for, it is not to be wondered at, that his moroseness towards his hard-hearted fellow mortals should have increased tenfold, and all the tenderness of his nature have centered itself upon his daughter, then barely ten years old. Unbounded affection, however, though absolutely necessary as an ingredient, is not always a good foundation for the successful education of a child; and in this case (in spite of the usual perfection of heroines) I am bound to confess, that though highly perfected in all those graceful and captivating accomplishments, which add so many charms to beauty; although strict and pure in morals, and eminently abounding in all those genial and kindly feelings that naturally spring from a good and tender heart, yet was the proper base of human virtue imperfectly existing in the breast of Helen Arnot. But slightly

instructed in the higher truths of religion, but little acquainted with its daily comfort and consolation, she observed its outward forms coldly as an exacted duty ; and the object of constant admiration and approval of a doting father, she considered it sufficient well-doing not to do ill ; and neither her long flattered vanity nor her uninterrupted happiness, would easily have agreed to the doctrine of how little she had acquired upon which to found real virtue or solid content. Whatever, however, she might prove to be upon a more serious examination than perhaps becomes the lightness of this little sketch, to the world she appeared as lovely and as enchanting a girl as ever gladdened society. Kind and good to all around her, gay and unaffected in her manners, she was a universal favourite ; and there were, at the time of which we are writing, besides Horace and Colonel Arnot, many who would have thought us sour and malicious libellers to have considered it possible that Helen could have a fault.

It was about six weeks after the little *féte* that we have recorded, that Colonel Arnot set forth upon his very handsome cob, with his peculiarly neat groom behind him, to call upon Mr. and Mrs. Leslie (for whatever was the *co.* in the bank, that was the indivisible firm at home). Colonel Arnot, however limited might be his income, was very particular that everything he had should be in the best appointed and most aristocratic style ; and Horace had often lamentingly remarked, how much better and more gentlemanlike looked the little dinner at Binfield, than the three splendid courses at Leslie Priory. The visits, too, of Colonel Arnot to his neighbours, were "few and far between ;" and though not apt to be daunted by the appearance of any of her neighbours, candour compels me to confess, that Mrs. Leslie felt a little "flustered" (to use her own expression) when Colonel Arnot, having cautiously dismounted, wended his deliberate way to the drawing room. After discussing two or three of the usual provincial topics, the colonel commenced with a preliminary hem !

"Mr. Leslie, I have lately observed a circumstance which daily forces itself more upon my notice, and which from my own feelings as a parent, and equally respecting

those of others. I think it right to communicate to you, which is, that if an attachment does not exist at present, there is every appearance of one growing up between your son and Miss Arnot——”

“ La ! Colonel !” exclaimed Mrs. Leslie, “ if you have not found out a mare’s nest ! why, every body must have seen that this long time.”

“ Were we all likely to remain in our present relative positions,” continued the colonel, without noticing the lady’s interruption, “ the matter would be simple enough; but since, as you probably are aware, I have been for some time prosecuting a suit to recover the dormant title of the earldom of Ellington, in which, I think, I may venture to say I am likely in a short time to succeed, some little more consideration may be necessary in settling the future prospects of the Lady Helen Leslie.”

“ Why, dear me, my good Colonel Arnot,” again interrupted Mrs. Leslie, “ she won’t be much the better for being a lady unless she gets some of the needful with it; and I believe that you cannot expect any money with the title. But the truth is the truth after all : either you think my son Horace good enough for your daughter, or you do not ; if the latter, depend upon it he never will be forced into any family ; but if you like him for a son-in-law, why, he will bring riches, and she will bring rank, and a very pretty union, it will be in my opinion.”

Now, although this was exactly the conclusion at which the methodical colonel intended ultimately to arrive, he had no wish that it should be reached by so short a road ; on the contrary, he had intended to make a wonderful display of condescension and paternal affection, in allowing, by degrees, his anxiety for the welfare of his daughter to give way to his natural objection to a match of such inferior rank. In spite, therefore, of the whole matter really to be considered, having been thus summarily decided by the worthy lady’s blunt but warm-hearted speech, a long desultory conversation of half an hour, ensued (with which, however, I will not trouble my readers), wherein the original form of dialogue was strictly maintained ; Colonel Arnot invariably addressing the banker, whilst he was as unfailingly replied to by Mrs. Leslie, her husband only

venturing upon a nod of the head, or occasionally a "certainly," in token of his approval of what his *better half* had asserted. The unanimous decision to which the trio came at last, was, that whilst there was no necessity to check the growth of the attachment between the young people, yet, as they had both some years to pass before they could prudently settle in life, there was to be no engagement entered into, or particular encouragement shown ; in short, this, like most other diplomatic conferences, ended in leaving matters pretty much in *statu quo*.

Old Leslie, who hated talking, and was very much afraid of the colonel, was delighted when the conversation was at an end ; and took the first opportunity of making an excuse for his escape by pleading the approach of his banking hours, from his punctuality at which he never deviated. What, therefore, was his disappointment when Colonel Arnot, also rising, said, "if you will allow me, Mr. Leslie, I will walk down with you, I have still some business for your private ear." With ill-dissembled constraint, he declared, that "nothing would give him greater pleasure;" nor did the worthy mistress of the house appear much better satisfied with this division of confidence, and her invitations to luncheon became more kind and pressing as she found that there was to be some affair arranged in which she was not to be consulted.

Having heard the hall door close behind them, and having walked arm-in-arm with the nervous banker so far as to secure the impossibility of listeners, Colonel Arnot addressed his companion, not in the tone of rigid formality in which he had before spoken, but in one of deep and difficultly repressed feeling.

"Mr. Leslie," he said, "I rarely speak of myself, still more rarely of my own affairs ; upon the few occasions on which I have made these the subject of communication with those from whom I thought I had a right to expect at least sympathy, the reception I have met with has not been such as to induce me to alter much my original conviction of the general selfishness of human nature. Our relative position, my dear Mr. Leslie, has to-day become somewhat peculiar ; there is every probability that our connexion will become a very near—a particularly

dear one ; in short, that we shall mutually share the care and affection of the only child of the other. There is but one thing I love in the world—my daughter ; I am willing to confide her to your son ; this binds us in so close a bond, that I have induced myself to consent to do to you what I have never yet done to mortal man, namely, to ask you a favour."

"I am sure," commenced Mr. Leslie, "I feel fully the honour that—"

"Pray make no professions, my good sir," interrupted the colonel, "until you have heard my request—professions I invariably discredit. I mentioned to you this morning that my long pending claim to the dormant earldom of Ellington was likely soon to be decided upon in the house of lords, and in a manner, I have every reason to believe, gratifying to my wishes. Yes ! I am not ashamed to own it—to my ambition.

"I am sure I am delighted," insinuated the timid Leslie.

"Pray hear me out. To insure, however, a successful termination, my lawyer presses me for the payment of his account, amounting to a somewhat heavy sum—more than indeed at present—a sum in fact—d—n it ! let me swallow my pride at once and tell the truth—I am poor—wretchedly poor at this particular moment—you have the character of having a large command of money—can you, and will you lend me three thousand pounds, which I pledge you my honour shall be repaid in four years from this time."

As he said this, Colonel Arnot stopped, and turning towards the terrified banker, examined minutely every movement of his countenance, whilst the latter appeared to be suddenly struck with some geological peculiarity in the gravel of the road upon which they were standing, so steadfastly were his eyes fixed upon it. At last he muttered,—

"You have but little security to offer, I fear."

"That of my honour."

The banker smiled, in spite of himself, at the colonel's idea of money transactions.

"And I will insure my life for the amount in case of my dying before the debt is liquidated."

The banker was on thorns—his natural kindness of heart—his anxious desire to oblige Colonel Arnot, were fearfully at war with his commercial feeling of the extraordinary and inadmissible nature of the proposal.

"Can you, or rather, *will* you oblige me?" persisted the colonel.

"Colonel Arnot," said Mr. Leslie, at last grown desperate, "you have been candid with me, I will be equally so with you. When I first was admitted a partner in the house of which I am now the principal, I promised never either to borrow or lend money upon my own private account, nor for the house, except upon such terms as the usual routine of commercial transactions would justify, and I fear—"

"You refuse me, in short," said Arnot, drawing up.

"God knows how willing, how anxious I am to meet your wishes, if possible, but any man of business must see," cried Leslie, as he saw the colonel getting every minute more angry, "that the credit of any house must suffer were it known that—"

"Thank you for the hint," said Arnot, bowing stiffly; "no house of yours, Mr. Leslie," most contemptuously, "shall suffer in its credit from any dealings with me. I wish you a good morning, sir, I beg not another word; all I request is, that it may be altogether forgotten that this conversation ever took place between us;" and, beckoning to his groom, the proud colonel mounted his horse, and formally lifting his hat, returned to his own dwelling.

Although no difference was perceptible in the intercourse of the two families, yet it cannot be denied that Helen's father bitterly remembered the refusal of Mr. Leslie; and it is thus that proud or weak men often consider that they are conferring a favour upon those whom they look upon as their inferiors by allowing them to minister to their necessities.

Horace and Helen meanwhile continued daily increasing in mutual affection. They had "never told their love;" indeed, there would have been no communication

to be made that was not already tacitly understood ; every action, every look spoke a language too plain to be mistaken, and they felt as fully pledged to each other as if they had ratified oaths unnumbered.

The time, however, drew nigh at which Horace's leave of absence would expire, and he would have to rejoin his regiment, and every moment appeared now to become doubly precious to them. They were seldom apart —their rides in the morning, their evening walks, were still together, and the approaching separation threw an occasional seriousness over their converse, that only promoted a more deep and heart engrossing sentiment.

But one brief week now remained before the period fixed for Horace's departure, and he had been some short distance for the purpose of buying a horse, which made him one day rather later than the usual time in presenting himself at Binfield, for the daily ride. Helen had, therefore, determined upon meeting him, and at about half a mile from her home she saw him galloping towards her upon his new purchase. He was, indeed, at that moment a subject for the painter's canvass, a model for the sculptor, as flushed with exercise, his dark curls fluttering in the breeze ; he sat with grace and ease as firm upon his wild and fiery steed, as if he had, in fact, formed a part of the animal which he bestrode.

"Look at my new horse, dear Helen," he said as he reined up at her side ; "did you ever see anything so beautiful ; I am afraid I am rather late ; but is not he perfect ?—and such a hunter—they tell me he can leap anything.

"Oh ! how I should like to see him," cried Helen, in all the riotous spirits of youth ; "pray make him jump over something, Horace, I do like to see a horse leap."

"Why, I have tried him once before to-day, thinking to go a short cut across the country to Binfield, and he does not seem particularly disposed for that kind of exercise ; but, however, if you would like to see it, Helen—"

"Oh ! indeed I should, so much," cried Helen in delight ; "do make him go over some little fence."

"No, no ! 'neck or nothing ;' I will not have a fight with him for a trifle," answered Horace, laughing ; "but

pray stand a little on one side, dear Helen, for I know he will behave ill."

So saying he put spurs to the fiery horse, and rode him at a large fence that skirted the road. The animal, however, perhaps having more sense than the enamoured couple, and certainly having no participation either in the admiration of the beautiful horsemanship of his rider felt by the young lady, or in the gratified vanity of Horace, positively refused to perform the dangerous and unnecessary task imposed upon him. He reared, he plunged, he kicked, he flew from one side of the road to the other, in short, he displayed the young soldier in every other feat of equitation except that which he wished to perform; and at the end of ten minutes the combatants were very much in the same state as the contending parties after one of the glorious victories lately narrated from the north of Spain; for though there had been a great deal of courage, yet there was equal obstinacy displayed upon both sides, and neither party had gained a foot of ground. Helen had, however, in the mean time, gradually become extremely alarmed at the danger to which she had excited her admirer, and cried out, in a most anxious tone,

"Pray, pray, dear Horace, do not attempt to force him, I am sure you will meet with some accident."

But Horace, who, if he had gained nothing, had completely lost his temper, shouted.

"Oh, no; if I let him have his way now, I shall spoil him for ever," and whipped and spurred the noble horse, and forced him to the fence, so that at last the animal, finding there was no escape, rose at the leap.

Poor Helen shut her eyes and screamed—one glimpse had been enough to show her that the horse, forced too near to the object to be cleared, was not able to spring completely over it. There was a tremendous crash—a low groan—but no word of comfort, no welcome assurance—"I am not hurt"—no, not even a cry of pain, which would have broken the agony of suspense, and told her that at least he lived. When she looked again she saw the horse lying upon Horace, who, covered with blood, was stretched apparently lifeless upon the ground; the animal had become entangled in part of the fence, and

as he frequently and furiously plunged to rise, he fell again and again with increased violence upon the mangled body of his master. The groom was immediately despatched to Binfield for assistance; but poor Helen had a considerable distance to ride round before she could reach the spot where he lay, whom she loved beyond all the world, to ascertain even whether he were alive or dead. Oh! how dreadful were those few minutes of fearful doubt; how much, how very much of pain and wretchedness is it possible to compress into the smallest space of time. At last she was by him; she had flung herself from her saddle, and was kneeling at his side. Alas! alas! what horrible disfigured mass was that before her!—no feature distinguishable, the body crushed—what spectacle that ladies faint in looking upon, was ever one-tenth part so dreadful, so disgusting as this; but Helen did not faint—no, she did not flinch—she put her hand upon the bloody breast, there was life, there was hope! The rest was nothing to her now, the one paramount fear was for the time dissipated—he was not dead. She endeavoured to staunch the blood from the gaping wound in his forehead, she put on one side the long curls “dabbled in gore,” that hung over his face. It was a dreadful spectacle; the hardened veteran might have turned away from it with a shudder; but what cannot delicate woman be reconciled to by the strong impulse of affection? poor Helen did everything that could be done until the arrival of the servants with a door, upon which was laid a mattress, to carry poor Horace to Binfield. When the medical man, who had been sent for express, arrived, long and painful was the anxiety of our poor heroine, for heroine in every sense she had proved herself, during the long hour that he was shut up in his patient's room; at last she heard his step as he came along the passage. She rushed from her room, she stood before him almost breathless—

“Will he live?” she stammered forth.

The surgeon, who had known her long and intimately, took her kindly by the hand, but he shook his head, as he turned it away evidently to conceal a tear, for he well knew the state of the poor girl's affections.

It was, indeed, hardly possible to flatter oneself with hopes that poor Horace could recover. His right thigh was broken, his head deeply wounded, and the whole of his body crushed, as it were, by the weight of the animal, and its violent kicks in its efforts to rise.

We will not dwell, however, upon this unpleasant portion of our narrative ; in about a week, by the strength of an excellent constitution, and the unremitting care of Mr. Amphurst, the surgeon, our hero was declared out of danger, though it was at the same time added, that it would be long, very long, before he would be sufficiently recovered to walk, or even to sit up, and doubtful whether through life he would not be a cripple. How different were then the feelings, though of affection equally strong, expressed by the mother (who had come over upon the day of the accident, and had ever since been domiciliated at Binfield), and the devoted Helen. " My poor boy a cripple !" sobbed the warm-hearted Mrs. Leslie, " and with his prospects in the army."

" Will it disfigure him much ?" timidly inquired Helen. " I mean, will he always feel pain from it ? but he lives, and will recover, that is comfort at least," and she burst into tears.

It was about two months after this that it was announced that Horace could be moved with safety to his own home, and then for the first time he requested to see Helen, which he had pertinaciously refused to agree to before. Properly cautioned not to be shocked at his appearance, by which, as usual, her nervousness was increased ten-fold, she was conducted into his apartment, into which but little light had been admitted, and there she saw extended upon the sofa the miserable wreck of manly beauty. Carefully wrapped in dressing gowns and shawls, the face alone was visible, but sunken and pale with confinement and suffering, with a large scar extending across his forehead, almost to his eye ; his appearance was so different from that which she had last looked upon as the idol of her worship, that the excited Helen involuntarily shuddered. The blood rushed to the face of the poor invalid.—

" I have been so anxiously tracing the amendment in  
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my looks, until I was sufficiently rehumanized for you to look upon, dear Helen, that I had almost forgotten how frightful I must still be to a lady's eyes."

"Dear, dear Horace, how can you speak so cruelly?" said Helen, hiding her head in her hands, and weeping.

"My good mother," said Horace, addressing Mrs. Leslie, who had conducted Helen to the room, "pray leave us for awhile. Nay! I know what you would say; I will exert myself as little as I can; but there is much that I must say to her. Come, my own mother, let me have my own way this day, and I will be as good a patient as ever to-morrow."

"Horace, Horace," replied the good-natured old lady, as she waddled to the door, "you know you can make me do what you please when you speak so to me."

There was a pause after she quitted the room. Helen was still leaning with her head between her hands, and the tears trickling through her fingers.

"This unfortunate accident," at last commenced Horace, in a constrained voice, "has put an end to the brightest dream that ever flitted before the eyes of man. Not three short months ago, Helen, I loved you with the purest, the most enthusiastic love, that man ever bore towards woman; and you—yes, though I never asked you, yet now I may say, I knew it well—why should we use words, our hearts had spoken. Yes, glorious being as you were, beautiful as the pictured creatures of imagination—good, clever, high in birth, the admiration of every one who saw you; you were mine in heart and soul—I knew it, I felt it. Can any one think it wrong that I was proud. Our parents had consented to our union—who could blame me that I thought my overflowing happiness was certain. Oh! Helen, Helen! what a curse must that memory of the past be, that tells me I have no hope for the future."

"Oh! why, why, Horace, why no hope? you will recover, you will be happy again. We shall still be as devoted as we were—or," and she paused a moment, "do you not love me still?"

"Love you, Helen," he hurriedly answered, "love you—what other cause, what other symptom have I of

existence? Look at me, the corpse in its shroud is not more ghastly. Where is the strength of man to fight one's way to honour and distinction; where the energy, the activity, alas! the power to protect myself. Who will join companionship with the deformed cripple, who will feel for his humiliation, who will seek his society? what prospect, what hope, in common with other men, have I in this world? what feeling can I indulge in but devoted, all consuming love for you? But you must no more be mine; the greatest cruelty, the most horrible punishment of ancient days, was joining the living body to the dead.—I must not emulate that example."

"Horace!" said Helen, starting to her feet, "I will hear you no longer; but that pain and sickness has irritated you, I could not have believed that you would have spoken as you have. You told me but a short time since that you knew I loved you, when you were gay, happy, and well, although I never told you so; but I now confess it to shame you. I do love you—more, ten times more, now stretched on your couch of sickness, than I did in the heyday of your spirits."

"I do believe it, dearest creature, it is like yourself, noble and generous! formed as you are, you could not think otherwise; but it must not be—you now feel, you are convinced that you love me still; but, oh! think of the life of care, anxiety, and watchfulness—the waywardness of a suffering invalid, the drag upon your spirits—the weight upon your young and buoyant heart. No, no, Helen, we must not join youth and decrepitude, beauty and deformity—it is not natural."

"What, then, is the usual fate of woman?" inquired Helen, her courage rising.—"What her duties, what her life? Is there no care and anxiety but the nursing the sick? are there no wayward fancies in the strong, no watchful hours past, awaiting the return of the high in spirits and the sound in health? Oh! Horace, Horace, how little do you know of woman's love, to think it is affrighted by servitude to the being it loves. Tell me this, were I suddenly blasted by some stroke of Providence, my features distorted, or

my limbs crooked, would you cast me off from your affection?—do you think our affection less strong, less permanent than man's? For shame, for shame, Horace, you should blush to make me force myself upon you in this manner. Let us say no more upon this."

" Well, be it so," said Horace, " I feel that I am acting selfishly and wrong, but I will admit myself to a hope of happiness again, and allow of your generous self-sacrifice upon one condition, that this subject is not to be again mentioned for one year, during which you are to consider yourself perfectly free and disengaged; if at the end of one year's mature deliberation you still do not discard one, who will exist for that year upon one hope alone, we will meet here, in this apartment—I to claim my treasure; but should I find you not here, send me no word, let me guess my fate, but let my last remembrance of thy voice be as I hear it now."

" Well, be it so, great diplomatist, the treaty shall be signed; but depend upon it you will, before you become 'the dead,' as you called yourself just now, have heard perhaps more of my voice than you may like, unless, which is more probable, becoming quite well again, you grow to be a sad flirt, and yourself forget the trysting-tree. However, remember the ides of September, 1818; and now let me ring, and get assistance to help you down stairs, for the world will have been wondering what can have become of us."

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" Cambridge, October, 1818.

" DEAR LADY HELEN,

" For so, as a friend, I feel certain that you will allow me still to address you. The compact that I entered into with the Earl of Ellington (when he was Colonel Arnot) shortly after his unfortunate quarrel with my father, not even to write to you until our year of probation was at an end, of course precluded the possibility of my even sending my cordial congratulations upon your elevation to a

rank which I believe so justly belonged to you, and which I am sure you will so pre-eminently grace.

" I was at the place appointed, on the day and at the hour named—but you were absent. I did not expect that you would be there. Do not think that I am about to reproach you. It was as it ought to be—as I expected: and if it was a bitter, very bitter pang, I am a poor peevish invalid, and was spoiled in my young days of happiness. God bless you, Helen! dear, dear Helen! it is the last time I will call you so, but it sooths my irritable spirit. Should you ever want a friend, a protector, would I might assist you, defend you, and then die; ay, die happy. I am studying at this university in hopes of entering the church. There are no prospects that can brighten my horizon in this world; but, oh! there is a glorious light beyond that shows me a haven of rest for the sufferer, where there are no mockers, no scorn for the deformed in body, as long as their mind is pure. I still think—shame on my pettishness—I *know* you will be glad to hear that I am better, much better, though still frightfully deformed, yet I suffer less.

" May heaven bless you.

" Yours,

" HORACE LESLIE."

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

" November, 1819.

" Fortune seems, with regard to you, my dear lady, to have recovered from her blindness. I have heard of your immense accession of wealth by the death of your uncle, and if it make you happier, I rejoice at it. How shall I own to you that I am a solicitor to you of a favour; but I know that your noble nature will feel that is more from a confidence in your generous heart, and to show how sincere is the esteem I retain for you, than from the least idea that I could have any possible claim upon your kindness. Though you have been little in the neighbourhood of Homesgrove for the last eighteen months, you must undoubtedly have heard of my poor father's bankruptcy, and consequent reduction from luxury and riches to want and poverty. But you are not, perhaps, aware, and Lord

Ellington, I trust, never will be, that a casual remark of your father's made, I am sure, without malice, and most likely in joke, 'that he did not say anything against the stability of the bank, but that he knew that the first partner thought that a loan of three thousand pounds would break it,' this remark, I say, eagerly repeated and wantonly exaggerated, caused a panic and an unexpected run upon the bank, which ruined my poor parent; who, however, after selling all his own property, met his engagements like an honest man, and died shortly after, happy in the consciousness, that if his fortune was crushed, his character was unblemished. Thus, reduced at once from affluence, I was unable to afford a longer residence at Cambridge, and was obliged to leave the university before I was qualified to take orders. Upon examining strictly into my father's affairs, I found still enough for my mother and myself to live decently; but a few months have convinced me, that my dear, excellent mother has been too long used to luxuries to be satisfied with comforts, and has been too many years indulgently prodigal in bestowing money upon me, to believe that there can be any limit in my now supplying her. In short, I found that she could live happily upon my income, but that my appropriation of any part of it cramped and annoyed her. Alas! since my accident, I have but few means of supporting myself, but a kind providence has assisted me, and I have been fortunate enough to obtain a situation as tutor in a noble family, with a liberal salary, and have left my mother alone. I have, from a foolish perhaps, but I hope pardonable, pride, taken a different name from that which my poor father used once to boast was good for a plum in any country in Europe, and therefore cannot at present visit her. It is for her, dear Lady Helen, that I solicit you. Your newly acquired property of Thedlington is close to the small town in which she resides: do, pray do, be kind to her. She has traced, with pride and affection, the different gifts that fortune has deservedly showered upon you. She always loved you; and you, who are rich and prosperous, can hardly be aware how much a little kindness is felt by the fallen, from those with whom they once lived on an equality. I know I

shall not sue in vain. I know your heart—it is my guarantee. I am wonderfully recovered outwardly, but my inward feelings assure me, that my sufferings will be mercifully and speedily shortened.

“ May you live long and happy, is the daily and nightly prayer of

“ HORACE.”

By these two letters we have conducted our readers some way forward in our narrative, and acquainted them with the principal events that took place in the interval. The success of Colonel Arnot in his claim to the peerage, and the sad reverse and ruin of the poor, kind-hearted banker. The decision upon the Ellington peerage took place within a month of the parting of Horace and Helen, which we have before recounted; and, in a very short time afterwards, Lady Helen received and accepted an invitation from an old uncle of her father's, who, though he had joined in the persecution and neglect of his nephew whilst he was poor and lowly, thought it a very different thing to have an earl and his lovely daughter resident in his house, and dependent upon his bounty. Lord Ellington, however, could not forget the injuries of former days, and though he had no wish to prevent his daughter from enjoying the pleasures and advantages of London society, yet could not make up his mind to leave his retirement to re-enter a world in which he had met nothing but cruelty and callous selfishness. Lady Helen, therefore, alone, was allowed to comply with her uncle's request, and was duly installed as the mistress of Admiral Arnot's splendid mansion in Portland Place, and pretty publicly announced as the heiress of his immense wealth, amassed, as, from the latitude of his town residence, our readers will have guessed, in the East Indies.

With beauty rarely equalled in possession, and riches seldom outnumbered in prospective; with gay, light spirits and unaffected attractive manners, it will not be wondered at that Helen was much, almost universally, admired, and had the dangerous poison of flattery poured into her ears from many of the most seductive and practised tongues in the gay world. The nature of Helen was one,

alas! to which such pernicious pleasure was most dangerous; for vanity was the predominant passion in her list of faults; and when she saw the refined and the exclusive, the clever and the courted, who passed others by with carelessness or repulsion, eagerly force their way to her, and modulate their voices to the softest tones of feeling, the earnest accents of persuasion, she began to fancy that she must be a person of very superior merits. Shall we confess it? Engrossed, as she became, with the delight of her own extraordinary success in society, followed, as she was, by a crowd of admirers ready to disperse the slightest crowd of serious thought that crossed her brow, by some well applied compliment, or some lively anecdote, by degrees, the memory of Horace Leslie and her compact, became daily more obliterated; and long before the probationary year of her boasted faith had passed, his image had ceased to be coupled in her mind with any feelings of passion.

The receipt of his first letter awakened her, indeed, for a short time from the gay but delusive dream in which she had been indulging. She wept over it for hours, she would on the morrow write to him, and renew her vows; plead for forgiveness, and be again to him the idol that she had been. "Poor, poor Horace," she said, "he will not be very hard upon me." A short year before, the epithet would have been "dear, dear Horace"—and this change exactly explains the difference in her feelings; those she experienced at present were the outpourings of compassion of a kind and tender heart, for one to whom she was conscious she had behaved ill; there was none of that fervent and devoted love which had made her combat successfully the arguments of his clearer judgment.

On the morrow, however, there was much to do, and another day's delay could make no difference; and so from day to day, and week to week, procrastination led her on, until having no real excuse for the long silence, she agreed within herself that it would be better not to write at all. Poor Horace never for a moment felt angry with her; deeply, very deeply grieved he was undoubtedly, but he had been perfectly sincere in the opinions he

had expressed at their meeting, and was perfectly convinced that when the excitement of his presence had subsided, and the recollection of their former intimacy had become more distant, that he, crippled and deformed as he was, could not be the object of the choice of a young, spirited, and beautiful girl.

In the course of the following year, old Admiral Arnot sank into his grave, overcome with age, gout, and the effects of an Indian climate, and by his will, Lady Helen became possessed of all his vast possessions of every kind, both estates and money. The whole was left entirely at her own disposal, and her father appointed sole guardian.

Amongst the host of worshippers at the golden shrine of beauty, one of the most distinguished was Lord Rutherford. Possessed of no good looks, and very moderate talent, it would have been difficult to say what were the causes that had placed him upon the pinnacle of fashion, on which he undoubtedly stood. Ridiculously impertinent to all he was pleased to consider his inferiors, he was offensively intrusive with those whom the world's opinion had constituted his superiors, stupidly and vulgarly *mauvais plaisir* in his familiarity, he was apishly rude in his assumed consequence ; and yet, though no one said a good word for him behind his back, he was universally *flèted* in society, and by the dint of sheer insolence had apparently earned a license for saying or committing any folly he pleased. It must be confessed that Helen was a little afraid of this *preux chevalier* before she became acquainted with him. All the stories she heard of the harsh things he had said of people, and the rude things he had done to them, had instilled her with a dread of meeting him ; when, therefore, she found him lowly and submissive towards her, the humblest of her admirers, the most unwearied of her followers, her vanity, the predominant fault of her nature, was highly flattered ; and working upon this passion, which he had quite cunning enough to discover, Lord Rutherford soon outstripped all competitors, and by coarse jokes upon one, and cold superciliousness to another, nearly banished all his rivals.

Lord Ellington was delighted with the prospects of this

connexion, for the young lord was in his own possessions sufficiently rich, and far from extravagant, and by a singularly *lucky* coincidence, the property which Helen had lately inherited adjoined that of Lord Rutherford, which circumstance had, indeed, been the cause of his intimacy with a person so different from himself as old Admiral Arnot. Thus sued on one side by this redoubtable lover, and pressed upon the other by the advice and solicitations of a father whom she so highly respected, Helen had nearly consented to bestow her hand upon Lord Rutherford. There was no love for him in her heart ; she had felt too enthusiastically, too passionately once, to be able so soon to nurture the same sentiments again : her affection for Horace, it was true, was now dormant and forgotten, but still it had engrossed all of devotion she had to bestow. But she was dazzled and bewildered ; she liked Lord Rutherford ; he amused her—he seemed to dote upon her—he promised her a life of uninterrupted happiness, that his sole duty would be to obey her wishes and cater for her pleasures. She believed him, and hesitated—she almost accepted him ; but the decisive words had not been yet pronounced. It was at this crisis of her fate,—just as she was about to leave London with her father, to take possession of her property at Thedlington, her admirer having preceded her, to deck Rutherford in its best looks, in hopes of charming her into becoming its mistress,—it was at this crisis, that she received Horace's second letter. Oh ! how it smote her heart. Horace in poverty—in a dependent situation, earning his bread, and she burthened and tired with excess of luxury. She would in some covert way, which he should never detect, bestow riches upon him. But no ; that he had prevented, by concealing even the name under which he now lived. At any rate, she would shower kindnesses on Mrs. Leslie ; he should hear of her attention and cordiality—he should recognise the heart he had once considered as his, in the zeal of her affection towards his mother. With this comfortable, consolatory intention, she set out for the country.

Every preparation had been so arranged as to make Lady Helen's entrance into her inherited property as gra-

tifying to her feelings as possible. She was met by the whole body of her tenants upon the borders of the estate. In the evening, bonfires were lighted upon the surrounding hills, and acclamations and vociferous shouts of good will, not a little added to by admiration of her beauty, accompanied her at every step, and yet she felt less happy than she had done. During the journey from London, she had been allowed more time for consideration and self-examination, than the whirl and quick succession of London engagements had for a long time left her. The last letter of Horace had brought his image painfully back to her recollection ; and she could not control an involuntary sigh, as she compared him as he was in the days of their unsuspecting love, of their unalloyed happiness, with the being who was now her all but declared husband.

These gloomy thoughts were, however, upon the morrow in a great measure dissipated ; for, before breakfast was finished, arrived Lord Rutherford, full of plans for her amusement, and in her honour. In the first place, his mother, sister, and two younger brothers had arrived at Rutherford, and a fancy ball was to be given in the following week ; everything was settled ; Helen was to form one of a quadrille with Lord Rutherford's sister ; the boys were to be dressed as pages ; the tutor, the cleverest creature in the world, was to change the library into one of Tippoo Saib's tents, the drawing-room into a Swiss cottage ; all the maids were to be dressed in short petticoats, red stockings, and round hats, and the footmen, with their faces dyed with walnut juice, were to be arrayed in full eastern costume : the garden was to be illuminated, fireworks to be let off ; Helen's name was to shine in crimson light ; in short, nothing was ever to have been so perfect as this *féte*, and everything entirely in honour of Lady Helen. It is not to be wondered at, that under such an accumulation of new pleasures, every serious thought, every nascent regret in our heroine's breast was at once crushed. There was so little time, hardly sufficient to get her magnificent dress made. Every shop in the neighbouring town had to be visited : old pieces of brocade, that, long since out of fa-

shion, the mercer had put into the lumber-room in despair, were now sought out, and purchased at exorbitant prices. In short, though fancy balls were then a novelty, they have since become so common, that I will not tire my readers with the details of what is now almost a daily preparation. I am sorry to say, all Helen's good intentions towards poor Mrs. Leslie were condensed into a request to her admirer (easily granted, of course,) that he would invite her to the ball.

The eventful day at last arrived. Lord Ellington and his daughter were to dine and dress at Rutherford. Every body was in the highest spirits. The Dowager Lady Rutherford overwhelmed Helen with care and civility; Miss Lollington, her daughter, called her Helen, and treated her as a sister, and the two hobble-de-hoy brothers took her all over the house, to show her the clever and tasteful arrangements superintended by *their* tutor, Mr. Wright. With spirits already worn out by the excitement of the day, Helen gladly, after dinner, betook herself to her room to dress. It would have been a relief to her to weep. Why, she knew not, but melancholy presentiments were upon her mind. By one of those extraordinary whims of capricious memory, that all have felt, but none can account for, it appeared to her that what was then occurring, either in a dream or in some other existence, had before happened to her. Her free, unfearing pledge to poor Horace with regard to the impossibility of her being changed whenever she appeared at a fancy ball, rung in her ears, and languidly and without exertion she allowed her active and clever *femme de chambre* to arrange her dress. The task was finished; and if, as she glanced at herself in the long glass that reflected her perfect, her angelic figure from head to foot, if a feeling of gratified vanity then throbbed high at her heart, it would have been hard to have found a being so callous to the charms of beauty, as not to have far exceeded her in appreciation of her charms.

She was anxiously called from below; the company had not yet begun to arrive, and Lord Rutherford was very desirous to show her everything before his duties as

host must for a while separate him from the object of his admiration.

"It is a beautiful evening, Lady Helen," cried he, as she came down stairs, "the garden is just illuminated and let us see that whilst we can, for in this charming climate nobody knows that another hour may not bring us a snow storm."

He was evidently in high spirits, perhaps a little excited by the wine he had drank, to the effect of which the hurry and fuss of arrangement had much added; and as he led her from walk to walk, and vista to vista, the explanation of the beauty of the arrangements for the ball, became gradually merged in exclamations of enthusiastic admiration of her, whom he called the Queen of the Feast.

"One thing, dearest Lady Helen," he whispered, passionately, "one thing only is wanting to add to the pleasure, to ensure the happiness of this evening, that you will say that one little word, so often implored. Surely, surely you have kept me long enough in suspense."

"Nay, Lord Rutherford," she replied, endeavouring to turn it off in a jest, "you forget my costume, we Elizabethan maids require rather a more formal scene of courtship than this moonlit walk; let us return to the ball-room, there you may enact your part with some effect, here it is lost."

"Where was there ever form where there was sincere love?" he cried; "but you mock me, Lady Helen—when, when is this prudery to end?"

"Let us return to the house," she answered, "this is not the entertainment you invited me to; and to say the truth, it is rather late in the year and evening for these sylvan scenes."

"By heaven! you shall not go, until you give me an answer!" he exclaimed, losing gradually all control over his irritable temper.

"Shall not! my lord, that is not a word I am much accustomed to—"

"Nay, will not, when I implore you," said he, catching her hand.—"Helen, you know not how I love you, do not trifle with me.—If I admired when first I saw you, how much more must I adore you now, looking as you do the very personification of loveliness."

"Lord Rutherford, loosen my hand, this is neither the time nor the method of seeking the favour of a young lady."

"Nay, rather, since I have so far proceeded," said the young lord, "let me thus claim you as my destined wife, only do not say no!" and I will take your silence as the confirmation of my hopes."

"Never! my lord," she exclaimed, angrily, withdrawing her hand, "but that you appear to be hardly in a state to judge of the propriety of your own actions, I would ask you, is this the way to gain the good opinion that you profess to wish for. For shame, for shame—stand from my way, my lord," for Lord Rutherford still placed himself so as to interrupt her progress towards the house.—"Stand from my way, I say; were my friends present, you dare not thus insult me."

"A friend is present!" cried the voice of Horace, "always ready to die to protect you from insult;" and he rushed between them, pale indeed, and worn in appearance, but scarcely less remarkable for manly beauty than when he had first gained the young affections of her who now stood trembling, almost fainting, before him.

"Mr. Wright," cried the enraged Lord Rutherford; "what insolence is this!"

"Well might I retort that question upon your lordship," replied Horace; "what unblushing insolence must that be, that could offer annoyance for a moment to such a being as that?"

"Mr. Wright seems to forget," said Lord Rutherford, with all his natural superciliousness, "that such a power exists in masters as that of discharging their servants when they forget their proper position."

"You, my lord, seem to forget that there is an inherent feeling in man to protect woman from insult, that there is a boiling desire to chastise impertinence in any one who disgraces his station. Your servant, my lord, I am no servant of yours."

"Indeed," retorted the enraged nobleman, "perhaps I am mistaken, I took you for the tutor of my brothers, paid by my bounty. Perhaps you are some knight-errant in disguise?"

" Horace, dear Horace, do not answer him," cried the weeping Helen, " for my sake do not."

" Indeed, is it thus ?" cried Rutherford furiously, " now then I can account for your distant coyness—your intimate and familiar acquaintance, with that young man, my brothers' tutor, makes your intention, expressed by your father, of bestowing yourself upon me, particularly flattering."

" Lord Rutherford," exclaimed Horace, seizing him by the arm, " beware that you tempt me not beyond my patience. I have long endeavoured to separate myself from the hopes, the cares, the feelings, and the passions of this world ; but I am fallible as mortals are ; you have raised sinful thoughts within me—breathe but a word against that spotless angel, and I strike you to the ground. Ay ! maimed—crippled as I am—the hand of death, as I verily believe, now upon me,—my rage will give me strength, and I will beat you to the earth, and buffet you brute-like, as you deserve."

" Stand aside, madman and fool !" cried Lord Rutherford, and as he spoke he raised his hand, and pushed him with violence—almost struck him to one side.

Horace staggered some steps ; he caught by a large branch, and tearing it by a wonderful exertion from the tree, his eye-balls starting from his head, his face crimson and swollen, every vein marked like whip-cord on his countenance, he raised the club with both his hands above his head, and rushed at his intended victim. The young lord stood aghast—surprise made him defenceless—but, in a moment the branch dropped from the hands of Horace—he staggered—he tottered—blood gushed from his nose and mouth, and he fell powerless to the ground. Again, but louder and more shrill, the agonized scream of Helen rang through the woods and pleasure grounds, and some servants who had been alarmed by the first cry, almost immediately arrived, and carried Horace to a neighbouring summer-house, gaudily lighted up in the preparation for the *flée*. Oh ! what a cruel mockery there appeared in the grotesque costumes around, and the death-like features and blood-stained garments of poor Horace—garments of the serious and sombre hue of the profession from which poverty alone had excluded him.

Horace was not dead, but life was evidently fast flitting; the excitement and exertion had been too much for his debilitated frame, and the rupture of a large blood-vessel, rendered recovery almost hopeless. He kept his dim eyes immovably fixed upon Helen, who followed him weeping and knelt by his couch; often he essayed to speak, but a fresh flow of blood nearly suffocated him.

"Horace, dear, dear Horace!" sobbed Helen, kissing his pale blue hand, "say—beckon to me—make some sign that you forgive me—I have been the cause of all your misery—I have now killed you."

"Helen!" whispered he in broken accents, "my Helen, I may call you now; you were the cause of all my happiness here—you are the cause of my seeking a far higher bliss hereafter. My God has granted my prayer to hear you once more call me dear Horace, and to die. What were my hopes, my prospects here, that I should wish to live—and what, oh, my God! what are thy promises for hereafter, that I should fear to die."

"My lord," and he beckoned to Lord Rutherford, who stood awed and abashed aloof from the couch, "do not think I was a spy upon your actions this evening; the superintendence you requested me to undertake, naturally drew me to those walks. I cannot regret the chance. I was saved by providence from the sin of revenging upon you the blow—the disgraceful blow you inflicted upon me; it was a merciful interposition for a dying man. I have forgiven you all your injuries to me—I can now do more, far more—forgive your wrong to her."

At this moment, a voice from without was heard crying,

"Horace, Horace—my son, my darling son! where is he?"

It was the voice of Mrs. Leslie; for the servant of Helen having recognised Horace as the tutor of the young gentlemen, had officially communicated his name, and it had reached her at the same time as the account of his danger.

Poor Horace started and shuddered—"Merciful heaven!" he muttered, "spare me this trial!" and as he spoke his eyes became glazed, and his troubled spirit was at rest.

## “THE SEA ! THE SEA !”

XENOPH. ANAB.

BY LORD NUGENT.

“LUFF, you swabber, and——! Luff, Joe, can’t you, and give those poor devils a chance, out on the yard-arm there, trying to reef that fore-top sail. Do you want to cant them ? and going five knots close hauled, with this swell? Luff, I say ! Handsomely, my sons,” continued the skipper, turning his head from the boy at the helm, and looking forward, and upward at the four poor men who were struggling over the yard, their heels higher than their heads, to claw in the volume of a wet straining fore-top sail, which now fluttered and flapped, and then again heavily blew out, with a crack as though to burst from the bolt ropes, as the vessel’s head came up or fell off from the blast. “ Handsomely, my sons; you’ll have a touch up in the wind presently. There, now ! Now’s your time—it lifts—in with it, rouse that weather earing well out. That’s your sort ! There, come in off the yard—in, every man of ye ! Fore-top sail halliards—hoist away again—brace up sharp, and sheet home—belay, belay—a small pull more of that bow line. There she walks—no near, Joe !”

“ Sky is dirty to windward, Joe,” continued the skipper, in a softer tone, as, with a lee leg out, he walked three steps aft; “ and an angry sunset we’ve had; shrouds to the sun, and mare’s tails, and that sort of a salmon-streak on the lower line, that means no good, more particularly over a black breasting horizon, with teeth like a saw. An indifferent wild night we are like to have of it !”

And an indifferent wild night sure enough it was ; as indifferent perhaps as ever befell a well found brig, beat-

ing up against a snorting north-wester, through that narrow passage between the Darkholm flats and the desolate and dangerous islands which cluster round that dreary coast. Low did she stoop, and heavily did she labour, through those boiling surges, beneath which many a stout ship has found its grave, and on which many a stout heart has toiled, bravely and long, after even hope itself has died within it, ay, and of which many a tender heart too has mused, almost to breaking, when the night winds have piped around the home of him who was at sea.

“ Up, my lads, watch and idlers—clear away the fore-top mast stay sail—man the jib, down haul—haul down, and hoist away. Light up once more, top men,—close reef, forward there ! A second reef in that main-top sail ! Come, be alive ! abaft there ; overhaul the peak and main halliards, and lower away that fore and aft main sail. We must get the try sail upon her. Forward ! rouse that weather back stay well up ; we mustn’t have the top mast by the board—we’ll carry on her, mate, as long as she’ll stand it. By the powers, we must have no missing stays now ! Look out for the light on the Longsands ! Thick as mustard, mate !”

The mate went forward : a dense fog had risen to windward. In vain did the skipper, spreading his hand between the binacle lamp and his eyes, strain his much-used sight across the black heaving waters, to catch one confirming glimpse of the distant light-house.

“ It must be there, or somewhere there, any how ; but we mustn’t wait to run ashore because we can’t see how it bears of us. Ready about—not a word ! Now, look out for a smooth, boy, helm’s a-lee—stay sail sheet ! Come, she’ll do that, any how. Main-top sail haul ! haul avail ! There’s a gallant craft under her four sails !” And the master took one turn of contented pride, five short steps and back again, upon his reeling deck, catching by the weather rigging as he passed along.

The fog was now drifting swiftly past the vessel ;—no eye could pierce or stare against it. At every plunge she struck against the opposing billow with a force that shook her to her centre, and every timber, mast, spar, groaned as if each had been endowed with a separate

voice to utter forth its separate tale of suffering and complaint. The master went below, to consult once more his well-thumbed chart, which lay on a small swinging table, under the glancing beam of a solitary lamp at the foot of the companion ladder. There he sat down, a huge bundled mass of wet fearnought, the lower half of his face wrapped in the folds of a red worsted comforter, and the upper shaded by a shapeless slouched hat, which shed its frequent drops upon the object of his study. For a minute he sat gazing on the unrolled half of the chart on which, as though to nail his careering vessel to the station he supposed her to have reached in her represented course, stood infix'd the closed points of his trusty compasses, in contrast with the broad expansive fingers of the other hand, which lay hard by, spread over a space denoting many a rood of "shoal water" with "small shells," "mud," or "grey sand."

"The Skull Rock," muttered he, "by rights should be somewhere on the starboard beam. If so, we are well under the lee of the Seven Grave Stones, and the Devil's Kitchen is on our quarter. But who knows?—such a night as this is! not a glimpse to be caught; and there's no truth in soundings; for, if we could get a cast of the lead worth anything, with the arming on, (which is an impossibility, going this gallows pace,) what would that tell? Five fathom, or four and a half, with small shells, tells nothing; it's the same for miles along this coast, till you're slap ashore on the Catchups; and then——" Mate," continued he, in a louder tone, as he rose from the depths again on deck, and, in flat contradiction of his late category respecting the uselessness of soundings—"Mate," said he, "send a hand into the weather chains; send the coloured man, do you hear? and bid him not sing out the soundings, but give them ast to me quietly. I'll be close to him. Whist! will you, forward there? Hold your chattering, and listen if you can hear the send of the sea in the caverns to leeward."

"And a half quarter, four."

"Very well, Lilly,—bear a hand with it again—heave cheerily. Go forward, will you mate, and try and keep a better look out than they chaps are doing on the forecas-

tle. Down with the helm, boy—down with it for your life!—Forward there! let the stay-sail sheet fly—check the lee head braces! Helm's a-lee!—Jump there, can't ye hear?—are ye all asleep? Hard down with that helm, boy, do, and give her a chance if she will stay, for I'll be shot if we've room to wear her. Brail up the try sail!—she hangs!"

And now came a moment of anxious expectation, such as only those know who have felt what it is when all in this world for them depends on the wind catching a head sail right. For one deadly half minute, she hung, her bows bobbing heavily, almost bowsprit under, the stay sail flapping as she dropped into the hollow of the sea, and undetermined on which side it should fill, as she rose again; the fore-top sail doing nothing to bring her round, sometimes back to the mast, and then full again, at every lurch the labouring vessel gave; and no object was visible, to show if she was at all disposed to pay off. The master rushed to the weather quarter, and looked for a moment anxiously down on the foaming water. At last—"Stern away, by Jove! shift your helm!—all's right—about she comes!—main-top sail haul—haul avall—fore-top bowline—out with the try sail again! Cheerily, my hearts! what are ye afraid of! Silence, and keep a better look out there forward! Ease her head, boy—no near—very well thus!"

Now, "very well" is a very compendious phrase, and does not always describe very correctly the general condition of affairs in the vessel to whose steersman this consoling assurance is given. Yet here it spoke, with tolerable fairness, the state of mind of those on board, relieved from the danger which had just before been imminent. She was now on the other tack, standing towards the bold and beetling rock which faced the shoals at about a mile off, with an even chance of weathering it without another board, if she could continue to show sail enough to the gale.

But the water was high over her lee side, and it was all she could do to stagger through it. Yet the peril was no longer urgent and immediate; and, as to what might next be apprehended, all was doubtful and indistinct; and

the mind of man is always sanguine, and never more so than when at sea, where a sense of duty is always present and lively to support and assist. At sea there are so many moments when all that is demanded from skill, experience and forethought having been done, and no instant exertion being required or practicable, there is a pause, in which the mind naturally reposes on hope, and hope reposed on soon becomes confidence.

But why delight to portray the sea in its terrors, when there is so much more of what is sublime in its smiles ? How ill have they scanned the real beauty and majesty of that glorious element, who combine them with the notion of an angry sea ! The sea is never angry : it is much too mighty to be angry. How inadequate an image of infinite power is presented in a storm at sea ! a thing with which human genius, human courage, nay, human force, may cope, and over which it is usually empowered to prevail—whose violence is great, but still is limited and surmountable.. But, when all is calm, and boundless, and fathomless, no waves to be buffeted by the stalwart prow, no stooping clouds between man and heaven, but the depths of ocean and the depths of sky blending in the warm bright glory of a summer horizon, without a visible line to fence in or measure space ; then may the mind take in a notion of Omnipotence. It is glorious to gaze upwards, from some spring-tide meadow, into that clear vault, from out the stores of which descend the viewless influences of light, of warmth, of freshening dew, and then perchance to hear the trill of the far off lark, poised above all scope of human eye, as it were the note of some glad spirit, warbling forth its joy to earth from the bosom of heaven itself. But more glorious still to look into that bright but inscrutable sea, the only pure, intense blue in nature, compared with which the sky itself is pale ; that tranquil water, in whose awful bosom, far, far below, there are depths beyond which the seaman's lead will sink no deeper, from which the line returns slackened to his hand, where all things that can reach so deep, and which time has not consumed, remain hung in space unmeasurable beneath them and around them. To survey this, to ponder on

this, may furnish an image of the power that rules beyond the regions of human sight or search.

The pure taste of ancient Greece—pure even among the infusions of its monstrous mythology—taught that perfect power is best expressed in perfect calmness. It formed an image of matchless strength,\* but leaning on its club and lion's skin : it formed an image of matchless speed,† but reclining in the languid symmetry of limbs which, if roused to vigorous exertion, could spring aloft from the mere impulse of the small wing bound to the heel : it formed an image of matchless majesty in the statue of the great ruler of the gods,‡ where it sat sedate, not bracing the sinewy terrors of a mortal arm, to hurl the brazen thunderbolt, but resting one hand upon the wand of Peace, and in the other bearing Victory ; a symbol of such magic influence, that he who formed it, it is said, scarce dared to look upon it while he worshipped. Such was the repose in which the pure taste of ancient Greece taught that perfect power was best to be adored—how much the rather by those who are taught to worship boundless mercy as the first attribute of boundless might !

The sea ! the sublime, the graceful, the lovely sea ! The sea, which, if it separates friends for a while, unites nations, and for ever !—which links together the great kindred of mankind, and which, even to those the most dearly loved between whom it rolls, is the conductor along whose connecting chain the cherished intercourse between heart and heart is still preserved, and sped, untouched by foreign hands, as the strains of sweetest music come unbroken across its waters.

And look at that vessel, basking on its gentle swell, or hastening along before the breeze ; that little gay bark in the distance, whose white sail only can be seen. Like the feather that skims across its surface, she stoops in acknowledgment to every breath ; but her small frame is full of energy and resource to grapple with the blast.

\* The statue of Hercules, called the Farnese.

† The statue of Mercury, found at Pompeii, and now in the collection of the King of Naples.

‡ The great statue of Jove, made by Phidias, and placed in the temple at Olympia.

The tall ship of war, that grand epitome of beauty, confidence and strength ; she seems as though alive to every impulse and sentient of every duty. She bears herself as an imperial being ; she moves as one fraught with intelligence to foresee, to protect, " to threaten and command." " With all her bravery on," fit symbol of that glorious empire whose arm reaches forth to the remotest regions of the globe, wherever heaves the billow, wherever commerce courts, or danger presumes ; whose " march is o'er the mountain wave," whose " home is on the deep." Though the black night be over the waste of waters, the ship is wakeful still. She speaks, she answers, with bright and glancing lights, and, through the day, with many-coloured flags, now soaring to the peak, and fluttering there awhile, now sinking again from sight, their task performed, as she catches the quick meaning or imparts it to the attentive partners of her course. Her voice is heard, short, sullen, imperious, as of one who brooks not hesitation or delay, to demand attention to what she inquires, to what she enjoins. See her diminish or increase her various powers, steady under change, to effect the object she has announced. How gracefully she rounds to, to wait the act of obedience in the rest ! She lowers her boat from her side. The venturesome little messenger dares the deep alone. Unheeded ? unprotected ? No ! for a watchful influence is o'er it still, to guard, to superintend, and assist. As the low, long galley leaves the shadow of her wing, as it mounts the swell or glides into the depths between, she marks its movements—she corresponds with her own. As an anxious mother's, her thousand cares are with him who is far away upon the wave. They cease not ; they pause not ; they speak in every gesture, till the returning wanderer is raised aloft to be received again within her sheltering bosom ; and then she holds once more her free and onward way.

And there has been war upon the sea, and haply there may be again. Again the wrath of nations may cast its red glare along those waters on which man should never meet his fellow man but in friendship and in aid. Shall we speak of war ? A melancholy theme ! An unnatural and fearful state of man, on which his mind, as it advances

in those arts and virtues which embellish and ennable peace, though it be fearless to the death for honour and for right, learns to reflect with less and less of pleasure or of pride. Yet those, who, not answerable for the continuance or cause of strife, have bravely done in war the duty of frank obedience to what their country claimed from its people, are not the less to be remembered with renown, and blistered be the tongue that will grudge to speak it. The laurel sits fairly on the sailor's or the soldier's brow, but dearer and more sacred is the cypress on his honourable grave, even though conquest may not have wreathed a crown to bedeck it.

Sam L—— was a lad of a temper as joyous and as kind as ever was wedded to a daring spirit. He was not of that class called nobly born. His name shed no lustre on his dawning fortunes; so, if recorded, it could add no interest to his story. His honest ambition was "to build, not boast" the credit of a name which he derived from an humble house; and, poor lad! he died too young to reap the glories to which his warm heart aspired. It is inscribed only on a small stone, raised in a foreign land, by the affections and esteem of his messmates, who

"Still, thro' the wild waves as they sweep,  
With watchful eye and dauntless mein,  
Their steady course of honour keep."

And they loved him well, because they had known him nearly.

At nineteen, he had passed for a lieutenancy; and, by that fortune which sometimes forms a young seaman's early fame, he was placed in command of a clipping privateer schooner, made prize of by the frigate on board of which he served. She had been captured on an enemy's coast; and his orders were to join, in her, the admiral's flag, which was flying some fifty or sixty leagues off on the station. And few who have not felt it can know the joy of a stripling's heart, who finds himself sole master of a separate command, and knows that he has skill and resources for it. For two days, nothing happened to vary the ordinary log of a beating passage in light winds. The third day was a thick fog, and, as it cleared up towards

evening, with a rising breeze, a stranger was seen to windward under three topsails—and what could he do but trim the sails to reconnoitre ? 'Tis true, he had no orders but to proceed with due diligence to his station. But to go about and stand on for an hour on the other tack, and so edge a little nearer the stranger, would by no means take him out of his course; and who is there but knows that one of a seaman's first duties in war time is, when not under orders positively to the contrary, to gain all intelligence of a suspicious looking sail ? He had not gone upon the starboard tack above half an hour before he saw another large sail, hull down, on his lee bow ; and the last sunbeam was now red in the west. It was plain that he could not hope to bring either of the ships within distance, before dark, to show colours ; but they made more sail, and the headmost bore up a little, as to near him. He now tacked again, and, feeling that he had no right to run into strange company at night, he kept a point or two free, under easy sail, in a parallel to the course she was steering, trusting to a good sailing craft, and a commanding breeze, and a good look-out withal. As it became dark, he tried his night signals. For awhile there was no reply ; and then the headmost ship showed lights, but her answer was unintelligible to him. The code of night signals in the British navy was, at that time, imperfect, and subject to many mistakes. At day-break they were both on his weather quarter, the nearest about three miles off; but two more large ships showed their lofty sails on the horizon. It was a clear morning ; and the leading frigate, for frigates the two first were, now signalized him ; but her flags spoke a language as foreign to him as that of her lights had been the night before. Both had the ensign of England streaming from the peak. But it was most improbable that an English squadron should be cruising on that part of the coast. And now his private code was tried, in vain. And something there was in the cut of the sails, but more in their way of handling them, which almost convinced him that they were foreigners. The moment was an anxious one : but it was to Sam one more of mortification than anxiety for the fate of the charge en-

trusted to him. He had a good clean craft beneath his foot, and, let the weather but keep moderate, and not too much sea, come what would, he had reason to believe that, holding a steady luff, the schooner might yet weather upon their square sails, so as to get to windward of them without passing within gun shot. But he knew his duty was not to risk his prize, when nothing was to be gained; and little to be sure was to be gained by working up to overhaul two strange frigates and two other ships of war, (proud though he was of his command) in a schooner mounting eight twelve-pounder carronades, and a long traversing gun amidships. So now, shaking out the last reef from his foresail he prepared to carry on, and a regular and eager chase began. For a time, he believed he was increasing his distance from the leading ship; at all events he stood nearer the wind, and she was not perceptibly fore reaching on him; and her consort was evidently dropping fast astern. But, alas ! the clouds rose, black as thunder on the horizon, the white horses came speeding along with them in the distance, it had already begun to blow strong, and the wind was gradually drawing more ast and bringing the pursuer nearly on his beam. The little vessel groaned and staggered under the pressure of sail; the sea curled high over her lee, and sheets of spray at every pitch came flying over all. Suddenly the headmost frigate, which was now gaining rapidly on him to within long gun shot range, hauled down the colours she had worn, and hoisted a different ensign at her peak. It was the one which, at that moment, Sam could least have wished to see. It was that of a gallant nation, between which and England long may it be before again a cannon shall speak in anger. A gush of white smoke issued from the bow, and, before the sound of the threatening message could be heard, a shot came skimming over the tops of the waves right a-head of the schooner. Presently another, which passed over her, between her masts, but struck nothing. "Now point the long traversing gun, and cast loose the weather carronades against closer work! —For here's what tells us 'she's within distance already of our midship challenger.—Something might be brought

down by it which might slacken the frigate's pace, and save the little vessel yet." So up went the union—and, as the schooner lurched, Sam himself with a ready hand to the lock lanyard, quick answering to a ready eye, fired the first shot in reply, and, jumping up on the slide, saw it strike right under the frigate's cutwater. "Give it her again, my hearts!" The second shot parted—"Well done, long Bess!" bellowed the mate, the glass to his eye—"Splinters near the forecastle!" "Again!"—When an eighteen pound ball came in from one of the enemy's bow chasers, struck a timber-head, and two men lay in blood upon the deck; the one a mangled corpse, the other with a leg knocked sheer from under him. "Luff her up a bit!" cried Sam, still firmly looking at the advancing ship, whose bow now towered high above the water. "Starboard the helm! now watch your time men;—stand by for a broadside!" Six of the schooner's eight carronades had been run out to windward, and, as she luffed up to bring them to bear upon her adversary, the fire of her whole weather side was given at once. Her slight frame heeled from the explosion of her own guns, and she quivered from the centre to the mast head. And, hurrah! down came the frigate's driver. But, in an instant after, as her helm went down, and her head sails shook in the wind, the red muzzles of the whole tier, to her quarter guns, appeared, and a tremendous broadside from her main deckers followed, as she luffed and came up to deliver it. The schooner's counter was torn up to the very bulwarks; three men were, as it were, blown away before the blast of the artillery; and a splinter, striking the young commander near the chest, broke his left shoulder, and dashed him down against the side. The gallant youth sprang up, his arm hung mangled, and the blood gushing forth from his mouth showed what had been the violence of the blow. But his courageous eye, unclouded yet by pain, lit up with matchless energy—"Stand to it, my hearts, my darlings," he shouted. But the whole mischief now appeared. As the wounded boy staggered once more to the weather bulwark, to hold on, he looked up. The crippled main-mast reeled—"Lower away, lower away! ease

off the fore-sheet, and put her right before it!" For a few moments the fight was silenced. All hands were busy aft in getting up a preventer shroud, and fishing the mainmast, and as she was falling off, another broadside came from the frigate's quarter-deck. The havock was not so great as before. But an unlucky shot, ranging forward under the bows, severed the bobstay. The powerless spirit could no longer stay the foremast as it swayed forward and aft, with the send of the sea.

"Get out a tackle forward! Up with the helm! Hard!"—but it was too late! The weakened mainmast, now deprived of all support, broke short off where the shot had entered. It fell with a tremendous crash. The deck, forward and to leeward, was overwhelmed with a mass of confused ruin,—and the vessel was left rolling on the swell, a defenceless wreck.

"Will you strike, sir?" whispered the mate; "see your men lying about, and——"

"Never!" exclaimed Sam, in the last excitement of a dauntless heart—"Not I. Haul in the ensign that's towing there along side, and send a hand," pointing upwards, "to stop it to that stump there. I suppose," continued he, in a lower tone, "I suppose they'll have it down, without us, soon. I see she's lowering a quarter boat; we have but to wait for them now!" He sat down on a carronade slide. His face was deadly pale. Suddenly rising, he drew his hanger from its sheath, and with a strong blow, broke it in two, across the carronade. His father had given it to him at parting. On its blade was engraved a powerful talisman—"England expects every man to do his duty." As the first boat (for two were lowered and manned), pulled up under the stern, he flung the pieces into the deep, and again sunk upon the deck, his face resting downwards on his right arm as he lay.

"Mr. L——, sir," said the mate, "they're along side. Look up, sir—come, sir, don't be ashamed, you've fought her well, and they won't make much of the prize at any rate; she has stood too much riddling to do them much good.—Oh, Mr. L——, I hope you're not much hurt,

sir. All's over now." He raised his brave young officer in his arms.—Yes, all was over, indeed! He never spoke again, nor did his eyes ever more unclose, to see his darling first command in the hands of another!

But a gallant nation did honour to his memory, and to his remains. All nations have brave men—and so

God rest his soul!—  
Sith 'twill no better be—  
We trust we have in this our land  
Five hundred good as he.

TO

## A MAIDEN SLEEPING

AFTER HER FIRST BALL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "VIVIAN GREY."

DREAMS come from Jove, the poet says;  
But as I watch the smile  
That on that lip now softly plays,  
I can but deem the while,  
Venus may also send a shade  
To whisper to a slumbering maid.

What dark-eyed youth now culls the flower  
That radiant brow to grace,  
Or whispers in the starry hour  
Words fairer than thy face ?  
Or singles thee from out the throng,  
To thee to breathe his minstrel song ?

The ardent vow that ne'er can fail,  
The sigh that is not sad,  
The glance that tells a secret tale,  
The spirit hush'd, yet glad ;  
These weave the dream that maidens prove.  
The fluttering dream of virgin love.

Sleep on, sweet maid, nor sigh to break  
The spell that binds thy brain,  
Nor struggle from thy trance to wake  
To life's impending pain ;  
Who wakes to love, awake but knows  
Love is a dream without repose.

## THE PIRATE AND THE CRUISER.

THE wind had blown from the eastward for ten whole days, and the fleet which lay at anchor off Harwich were prevented from going to sea. Several of the crews were on shore anxiously waiting to see "blue Peter" flying at the masthead ; but they looked out in vain : the wind still kept them locked in.

The Dauntless was lying at the harbour's mouth, waiting for the first chance to get away, that she might drop down to Portsmouth previous to her leaving the British coast, as she was destined to go in pursuit of a desperate pirate named Gonsalvo, who had, under cover of the Spanish flag, greatly annoyed the merchant traders, robbing and murdering their crews, and destroying their ships. The crew of this vessel were not allowed to remain on shore, in order that they might be ready to put to sea the moment the wind would chop round in their favour.

One evening the crew were taking their grog below ; one or two acquaintances had been admitted on board ; and by way of keeping up the hilarity of the evening, Tom Pipes was called upon for a song. Tom, nothing loath, began to clear his voice ready for harmony ; but Peter Dolesful, one of the crew, rose up and protested against any singing—"because," said he, "the wind blows pretty stiff just now, and singing may increase it."

"Belay, belay !" cried Gunnel, the helmsman—"let's have none of your superstitious palaver now, old Peter ; we never try to pass a merry hour or two, but what you attempt to throw a wet blanket over us."

"A song, a song !" roared some twenty voices, and Tom Pipes struck up, well aided by a powerful chorus :—

Blue Peter, at the mast-head flying,  
Warns us to set sail again ;  
The pirate bold, our threats defying,  
Scorning fear still ploughs the main.

But if once our guns should reach him,  
Then his mettle shall be tried—  
Grappled close we'll quickly teach him  
Britons will not be defied!

Tom Pipes gave this in the true sailor's style, and met with due applause from his hearers; but Peter Doleful sat with his arms folded, and although all his messmates were full of merriment, he scorned to join in it. "You sing about Blue Peter," said he, "but I'm afraid it will be a long time before you see him flying at the mast head."

"What ails you now, friend Peter?" asked Jack Junk  
— "what new maggot has got into your head?"

"It's no use gibing and jeering in that way, master Junk," replied Peter Doleful—"I positively tell you we shall have no luck this voyage. Here we have been at anchor in these roads for ten days, and here we are likely to remain, for the wind seems determined to set right in our teeth. I remember when we were going to weigh from Yarmouth there were two cursed crows or ravens hovered over the vessel and pitched upon our top sail yards: that was a bad omen, you'll allow; and although we fired blank cartridges at them, they would not come down, till Tom Pipes fetched them down with a charge of small shot."

"But, friend Peter," said Junk, "I'm afraid you give way too much to these superstitious fancies; we have met with no ill fortune since we set sail, except to be sure that we have got windbound before we have cleared the British coast, but that's not a misfortune, it's more a matter of accident."

"Not a misfortune!" exclaimed Peter Doleful—"I think it is. Accidents are misfortunes ar'n't they? What the devil's the difference between them! If you break your neck by accident, that's a misfortune a'n't it? If you get shipwrecked, and lose all you have on board by accident, that's a misfortune a'n't it? So now, Mr. Wiseacre, I should like to know what is the difference between accident and misfortune?"

"Why a great deal," replied Junk. "A man may find a sum of money by accident—that's no misfortune, is it?"

A rich relation may die by accident, and leave one a fortune—that's no misfortune is it?"

"Stop there—bring to, Master Junk; you upset your own tactics there. I grant that the accident is no misfortune to him that obtains the property; but you don't mean to say that the accident is no misfortune to the person who is killed by it. No, no, Master Junk—if you attempt to sail on that tack, you are sure to go to leeward. I ain't superstitious; but although you and the rest of the crew may sneer at it, be assured that there are omens and forewarnings of what is about to happen: as, for instance, recollect the very day we were preparing to sail, didn't that old tom-cat scratch under his left ear, just before we left the George and Dragon; and when I said it foreboded ill-luck, you all laughed at me; but I was right: for poor Tom Jigger who had carried too much sail aloft, lost his bearing as he was stepping aboard, pitched into the water, and was drowned; that was an accident, and I suppose you'll allow it to be a misfortune. Don't you remember when the owners in London paid Jack White, the boatswain's mate, with a check, and because we were in a hurry, he held it to the fire to dry; and didn't I say, 'Jack White, you should never dry writing by the fire, because it's unlucky'; you all laughed at me then; but I was right: for Jack White had the flaps of his Flushing coat cut off, and pockets, check, money and all were grabbed by some land pirate, as he was on his way to the bankers, and there he went full sail down Cornhill, like a vessel that had lost her mizen: that was an accident and misfortune too, or the devil's in it!"

Jack Junk gave up the argument; he declared Peter to be incorrigible, and therefore left him to pursue his own course. Their visitors took leave, and went ashore; the night-watch was set, and Peter Doleful retired to his hammock, to ponder on future untoward events,

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Brazio de Hiero was a most notorious pirate, who with twenty daring associates, ravaged the seas. The most tempting rewards were offered for his capture either dead or alive; but all attempts had hitherto proved fruitless. He was no common depredator, but had descended from

a noble family ; his youthful days, however, had been improperly spent: he had associated with designing young cavaliers who frequented the gaming-table, and this planted the seed of his future misfortunes. He had been affianced to a lady of considerable attractions, and their union was shortly to take place ; he had, however, squandered away so much money, and so encumbered his estate by gaming and extravagance, that he found his finances fall so short of what had been anticipated by the lady's parents, that he felt ashamed to meet them until he had in some degree repaired his fallen fortune. In consequence of this the day of their union had from time to time been delayed ; until at last the day was irrevocably fixed, and no excuse was left for further procrastination. He consulted with his companions what was best to be done ; the result of their conference was, that one more attempt should be made at the gaming-table, but not on the uncertain chance by which their former play had been guided : loaded dice were now to be used, and other desperate means resorted to. Fortune at this time seemed to favour him, and he left the gambling-house with a heavy sum of money. He was overjoyed with his good fortune, and inwardly chuckled at the unfortunate dupes he had plundered. The day of his nuptials approached, and he now felt none of those terrors or fears of exposure which but a few days since had threatened him. He purchased a splendid equipage, his mansion was furnished like a palace, and he now seemed to defy the further frowns of fortune ; but never once did he listen to the voice of conscience, which told him he had purchased grandeur and riches by treacherous and dishonest means.

The day at length arrived. Brazio de Hiero, arrayed in the most costly habiliments, entered his carriage : it rolled on swiftly, and soon reached the mansion of Isidora. The servants attended at the door of the carriage ; he descended the steps ; the morning was beautifully serene, and he determined to take a circuit through the garden instead of entering the house at once. He had already advanced down an avenue thickly planted on each side, when a man suddenly started from behind a statue,

and stood before him; his cloak was raised so high as nearly to cover his face. "Signor," said the stranger, "before you enter the mansion I must have a few words with you."

"You!" exclaimed Brazio—"a perfect stranger! what can be your motive!"

"I'm no stranger, but your accomplice in villainy!" replied the intruder, as he uncovered his face.

"Juan de Alva!" exclaimed Brazio.

"The same," answered Juan.

"Speak quickly, Juan," said Brazio—"What can occasion this interruption?—be brief, for my absence at such a moment may cause suspicion, and ruin my expectations."

"Thus then it is," said Juan: "Fortune has not been so propitious to me as to yourself. Not satisfied with the sums I gained on the night we played with loaded dice, I went once more to the gaming-table, and took with me what I supposed to be loaded dice: but the demon had deserted me—I had by mistake taken proper dice instead of loaded ones. Not being aware of the error I had committed, I staked heavily; I lost at every throw, and left the gaming-table without a single sequin to help myself. I rushed into the street almost frantic; I knew not where to fly for succour, until I casually heard a party talking of your intended marriage; this reminded me of you, and I come to ask your aid."

Brazio was surprised and chagrined. "What would you have me do?" said he. "You, who can fool away a fortune in a few hours, would find the trifling aid which I could afford of little benefit."

"Trifling aid!" exclaimed Juan, as he darted a furious look on Brazio—"Do you think I come to supplicate like a poor beggar?—No, in this respect, I command! Either give me a part of your ill-gotten wealth this instant, or, ere another hour passes, your greatness shall crumble into mere nothingness!"

"What mean you?" exclaimed Brazio.

"To confess my participation in the late gambling affair, when we played with loaded dice," replied Juan; "to expose you, and——"

"Hush!" exclaimed Brazio—"not so loud! Here is my purse—it is full of reals; take it, and quickly leave me; if we are seen together, it may be the ruin of us both."

Voices were heard; and Juan, not wishing to be seen in his present disorderly state, quitted Brazio, saying, "I leave you now, but we shall shortly meet again." The voices sounded nearer, and several servants who had been in quest of Brazio approached, and informed him he was waited for at the mansion. He followed them and was conducted into the presence of Donna Isidora and her father, surrounded by many noble guests, before whom the marriage ceremony was performed.

The Dauntless lay at Harwich two days longer, when the wind veered round to the north-west, and she put to sea. A tide took them through the Sweyn, and they came to anchor for a short time in Dover roads. Next morning the wind was favourable for running through the Channel, and the Dauntless cut through the water gaily. The crew were congratulating themselves on the favourable weather which they now experienced, when they observed Peter Doleful coming slowly towards them, with his usual countenance. "Well, Peter, how fare you, old chap?" said Tom Pipes—"Fine breeze of wind right ast—canvass well filled—going at the rate of ten knots—soon see the Atlantic, eh?"

"I wish we may," replied Peter, with his usual doubtful look—"I wish we may; but I fear the wind won't last long in this quarter."

"What, more omens!" said Jack Thompson, with a leer.

"Yes, more omens," reiterated Peter, with a look of rebuke. "That d—n cargo of pigs will spoil all. If the captain couldn't dine without pork at his table, why couldn't he have it ready killed. Pigs at best of times are not lucky. Now only look at that ugly porker with his nose pointed right ahead. What do you suppose he is looking at so intently?"

"By my shoul, I can't tell," replied Pat Larkins, the carpenter.

"Ah, you ignorant lubber, I thought so," replied Peter. "He's looking at the wind to be sure: he sees it plain enough—wind right ahead; we shall have it slap in our teeth before two hours are over."

The crew laughed at Peter's prophecy; but it was not quite such a hearty laugh as was the general custom. That pigs see wind was not altogether disbelieved, and that the pig's snout was pointed right ahead was beyond a doubt. Hour after hour succeeded, but the wind still kept ast. Evening came, wind still favourable. Peter and several of the crew had gone below to get their grog. Pat Larkins, who smarted under Peter's rebuke, couldn't forbear having a fling at him. "Where's the wind now?" roared Pat with a laugh, and a mischievous glance of the eye.

"In the north," replied Peter drily.

"And the pig's nose to the south!" exclaimed Pat—"Blood and turf, it's impossible, man! How can the pig keep his nose to the south, and see the wind from the north—unless to be sure he might squint a small trifle?"

Peter looked mysterious, and with a solemn countenance disdainfully eyed Pat Larkins, as he said, "What can you expect from an Irishman but a blunder? Now, to show you that you have no more brains than our stern-post, I'll just explain matters a little. I have been at sea many years, and have always paid strict attention to signs of changes of weather, and such like prognostications; and that a pig sees wind is more than all your philosophers and astrology chaps can contradict. This pig of ours, as you all know, pointed due south, and we should have had the wind from that quarter in less than two hours, had it not been for a scheme which fortunately entered my head at the moment."

"And what scheme was that?" inquired Pat.

"Why," said Peter, "I lifted the pig in my arms, and turned him right round with his nose to the northward."

Pat and the crew burst into a loud fit of laughter. "Ay, ay, laugh away," cried Peter with a sneer: "but, depend upon it, if it had not been for this expedient, we should have been blown back a hundred miles by day-break. And you, Mister Pat Larkins—you're a pretty

lubber to go to attempt to overhaul my grammatics and my larning, a'n't you?—what a pretty mess you made of it when our vessel was new rigged, and we were so pestered with company that the captain was obliged to excuse himself from allowing any more strangers aboard till we got out of harbour, a pretty bull you made of it then, sure enough."

"The devil a bit of bull was there about it, Mister Peter," said Pat; "but I gave a clane, dacent, off-hand answer to a plain question, as my messmates here shall decide: Our ship lay alongside the pier; all the crew were on shore except the captain, myself and the mate. The captain and mate were down below, overhauling a chart, and I remained on deck to give answers to any inquiries. Presently there comes a great big gentleman with his head as thickly powdered as if Katty Maloney had emptied her flour-tub over him. 'I want to come on board and see the ship,' says he. 'You can't do that thing just now,' says I. 'And why not?' says he. 'Because there's nobody aboard but the captain, and he's just gone ashore,' says I. Now where's the bull in that, messmates?"

A roar of laughter followed; and the crew promised themselves a good cargo of mirth as long as they could set Peter and the Irishman foul of each other.

Plymouth Sound was now but a few miles distant; and they brought up in order to take on board two military officers who wished to accompany the captain, to whom they were related. They shortly set sail again. The wind was blowing a stiff breeze from N. N. E.; Peter was at the helm; they were running through a narrow channel, sounding; and Peter knew that extreme attention was necessary on account of the number of shoals which were close to them. One of the officers was standing near the binnacle, carelessly looking round; while he was whistling 'Rule Britannia.' Peter looked at him once or twice with a countenance somewhat tinged with dissatisfaction, till, not able to contain himself any longer, he turned to him, saying, "Don't whistle, if you please, sir."

"Not whistle!" ejaculated the officer—"My good fellow, what harm can there be in whistling?"

"Perhaps a great deal just now," replied Peter.

"That is odd," observed the officer: "you must be a very extraordinary being; not two hours since you were whistling yourself."

"Ay, that may be," replied Peter; "but we had no wind at that time, but now we have got more than we want."

"What!" said the officer, "has whistling any influence over the wind?"

"Most undoubtedly," replied Peter, with a grave and somewhat consequential gesture. "Never whistle when it blows hard; but whenever you are becalmed, *you may whistle for a wind if you like.*"

The officer smiled, turned on his heel, and went down to the cabin, leaving Peter to deal with the rising wind in what manner he might think most proper.

The noble guests at the mansion of Donna Isidora partook of a splendid banquet after the marriage ceremony, and it was late ere the festivities of the evening were concluded. The new-married pair entered Brazio's carriage, and returned to his mansion. The next morning Isidora's father visited them, and put Brazio into possession of the fortune which he had promised to bestow on the marriage of his daughter. About a month after that period, one evening, when Brazio was about to retire for the night, a servant entered, and informed him that a stranger, who declined to give his name, desired to see him instantly. Brazio turned pale; the hour was late; could it be another of the gamblers come to exact further aid?—he knew not what to think. At first he thought of refusing to see him; but a moment's reflection told him that would be an act of cowardice, and this was a moment when nothing but bold measures would suit. He descended to an apartment adjoining the hall; he entered; Juan was seated there, Brazio gazed at him with surprise. "What now?" said he—"Did I not give you the aid you required?—why would you trouble me further?"

"Signor Brazio," replied Juan, with a kind of ceremonious sneer, "I do not understand you; I had expected you would have given a more friendly welcome to one

so deeply interested in your fortune ; but as you appear impatient, I will at once explain the cause of my visit. You cannot have forgotten the success which attended us at the gaming table, when you made use of the loaded dice ; we laughed heartily at the dupes whom we had defrauded, and little dreamed that we should be discovered."

" Discovered !" ejaculated Brazio.

" Ay, discovered," rejoined Juan. " You look agitated — your countenance turns pale ; but you need not fear at present ; your safety depends upon your own conduct. Now mark me—it has been discovered that you were the person who introduced the loaded dice, and this very evening you would have had a visit from some of those unfortunates who were plundered. I could not, however help feeling for your situation : I called to mind that you had just become united to a young and amiable wife, while I had neither wife nor children to sympathize at any misfortune which might befall me ; I therefore made up my mind to become a victim to friendship, and save you from disgrace : I denied that you had any knowledge of the dice being loaded ; and with a great deal of humility and apparent sorrow, have confessed that I was the guilty person."

" Generous friend," exclaimed Brazio, " such a noble sacrifice shall not go unrewarded."

" I don't intend to go unrewarded," replied Juan significantly ; " and that is the occasion of my present visit. In order to save time I have drawn up a paper—all you have to do is to sign it, and our business is settled at once."

" What is the purport of this paper ?" inquired Brazio.

" It simply acknowledges certain obligations due to me, in consideration of which you agree to assign half your present estate to me."

" Madman !" exclaimed Brazio furiously—" Sooner would I beg my bread from door to door, rather be condemned to the galleys, than stoop to such conditions !"

" Don't be in a passion, Signor Brazio," replied Juan — I am cool you perceive. You do not choose to sign the paper—well, you shall have your wish, and therefore

I will use my interest to have you sent to the galleys. Good evening, Signor. I shall not trouble you with another visit. There are twelve more of our associates in villainy that would be glad to see you—I will give them your address, perhaps they will meet with better success than I have done—at any rate it would be worth a trial."

Juan advanced towards the door.

"Hold, miscreant!" exclaimed Brazio, as he drew forth his sword—"think not I will suffer you to escape my just vengeance—your life is in my power, and this moment—"

"Hush, hush, Signor Brazio," said Juan—"Keep your temper as I do. Your sword is certainly a sharp instrument, but I have two friends at hand, the sound of whose voice will ring your funeral knell."

With these words he drew forth a brace of pistols and pointed them at Brazio. The two desperadoes gazed on each other—it was a picture after nature—it was two tigers measuring the strength of each other's power. Each stood on the defensive. At length Juan broke silence: "Brazio," said he, "you see I am too cautious to place my life in jeopardy. I know you well; and I feel assured you are not apt to be over particular as to the method of silencing friends who know too much of your affairs. Sign that paper, else this instant I will denounce you to the alcade. For myself I care not, I would even ascend the scaffold, provided I should have you for a companion. I bear about me a letter addressed to Alvarez, detailing all the mal-practices of which we have been guilty; he would of course take immediate measures for your apprehension, for you are well aware that he is not friendly towards you, since you have been his successful rival in having gained the hand and fortune of Donna Isidora."

"Leave me, leave me!" exclaimed Brazio—"Another time we will arrange this matter."

"No time like the present," replied Juan—"I cannot depart without that paper. Your signature, Signor, your signature. Time grows short; choose therefore between the alternatives—either accede to my demand, or be for ever disgraced."

"May all the direst plagues that ever cursed the earth

await on thee, thou devil!" exclaimed Brazio, as he took up the pen.

"Your signature," again exclaimed Juan, as he pointed to the paper with a demoniac grin, "or your own servants shall be the first to learn the true character of the man whom they serve."

Brazio, trembling with frenzied agitation, hastily signed the paper, then started up, and advancing towards the door, exclaimed, "Wretch, begone, and never let me see you more!"

"Signor, you shall have your wish," replied Juan, as he coolly folded up the paper. "Should I at any future time want the aid of your purse, I will not come myself, I will send Alvarez—my friend Alvarez—Alvarez, your rival." With these words he rushed into the street and instantly disappeared.

Brazio sent all the servants to rest, and rushing into his private chamber, loaded a brace of pistols, and throwing his cloak over his shoulders, quitted the mansion by a door which opened to the garden at the back, by which means he hoped to overtake Juan and wreak his vengeance on him. From the moment he had been compelled to sign the paper he had come to a resolution that Juan should not live to reap the benefits of it. Brazio was fully aware of the danger that attended his murderous project. He knew the power which the relatives of Juan possessed in Spain, as well as the danger of embroiling himself with his old associates, and he therefore determined to sacrifice his victim secretly. Juan had also acted with some discretion, or at least with a determination that Brazio should not escape if he assassinated him, for he had given a letter to his servant with strict orders to present it to Alvarez should he not return home at midnight. The contents of this letter would state that if he should not see him within an hour, he might conclude he had been assassinated by Brazio.

It was near midnight when Brazio reached the strada. He listened for awhile, all was quiet; he proceeded a little further—he paused—a footstep was heard at some little distance; he retired behind the pillar of a portico near at hand; the footsteps approached—it was Juan.

"Perish, most execrable villain?" exclaimed Brazio, as he fired his pistol at his head. Juan reeled and fell. Brazio instantly tore open the vest, and triumphantly plucked from thence the paper which Juan had that evening forced him to sign. The report of the pistol had alarmed some of the inhabitants; and Brazio knowing that his safety depended on his reaching home before his absence could be noticed, snatched up the pistol and hurried away. He reached the garden-gate, through which he passed unobserved, proceeded to the chamber, replaced his cloak and pistols, and retired to his room without any of the servants being aware that he had been from home.

Juan having failed to return home at midnight, his servant delivered the letter to Alvarez. Two hours had passed, and accordingly, he, with a party, set out in search of him. They observed several people gathered round a wounded man. They approached, and, to their surprise and horror, beheld the corpse of Juan. They loudly exclaimed against Brazio, whom they designated as his murderer. One man among them, who had the appearance of a mariner, had picked up the pistol which lay near the body, and hearing the name of Brazio, seemed to recognise it.

"Brazio!" exclaimed he. "Surely I know that name."

At the instant Alvarez and his party would have proceeded in a body to Brazio's house, but were restrained by the mariner.

"Don't be too hasty," said he: "this affair seems to be wrapt in mystery, and it may be difficult to fix the charge of murder on Brazio. I know him; let me go to him alone, and I shall, perhaps, be able to elicit enough to criminate him."

Alvarez and his friends agreed to this, and Ovieda (that was the mariner's name) arrived at the mansion of Brazio next morning, and, with some difficulty obtained an interview. When Brazio entered the chamber, his countenance was pale and haggard, his step faltered, and his eye glanced keenly but fearfully on Ovieda.

"Friend Brazio," said the mariner, "you do not seem to recollect me. Have you quite forgotten your old acquaintance Ovieda?"

Brazio drew back in horror.

"Nay," continued Ovieda, "you have nothing to fear from me. I trouble myself little about land affairs now. It is full ten years since I have been on *terra firma*. I have made the sea my residence; I have as fine a vessel as ever stemmed the wave, and I mean to live and die in her. But my time is short; I must be on board again before night. I have come to warn you of a danger, and teach you how to avoid it." He paused and looked around. "Are we alone? Are there any listeners?"

"No," replied Brazio. "Speak low, and no one can overhear you."

"Listen, then," said Ovieda,—"Juan has been murdered, and suspicion points at you."

"At me?" exclaimed Brazio, in agitation. "My servants can bear witness that I did not leave the house the whole evening."

"I dare say they will," rejoined Ovieda; "but there is one circumstance which you will find it difficult to get over. This pistol, which has been recently discharged, and which laid near the body of the murdered man, bears a handsome silver plate, on which your name is engraved."

Brazio stood motionless. Ovieda had, indeed, spoken truly; for at the moment he took the papers from the open vest of Juan, his pistols fell out, and the night being dark, he had, by mistake, taken one of Juan's pistols, and left his own in its stead.

"Signor Brazio," said Ovieda, "you see I know the whole of the matter, and I am the only one who can fix the murder on you. Come, I will not be unreasonable. I don't want to see you mount the scaffold through my means, nor can I suffer such a golden opportunity as this to escape. You are rich. Share your purse with me,—as I have formerly done with you,—and, for the present, I will conceal you from your enemies. Alvarez would give his head and ears to be master of the evidence which I possess. He would gladly agree to give ten thousand piastres to bring you to the scaffold. Now, I will save you from it for half that sum—But time passes quickly! Put on your cloak and hat, and accompany me to my

lodging ; and, in the interim, I will make inquiries whether Juan still lives, as also whether he has declared the name of his assassin."

Brazio hastily threw his cloak over him, and followed Ovieda to his lodging by the sea-shore. The artful Ovieda cared not a straw if Brazio and the whole of his associates swung together on one gibbet, so that he was the gainer by it ; and now he saw a chance of turning this to double profit. He sought out Alvarez, and told him that he had obtained sufficient evidence to criminate Brazio ; but that he would not breathe a sentence of it until he could disburse five thousand piastres.

Alvarez was astonished at the demand, and refused to accede. " Fool," said he to Ovieda, " do you forget that I have nothing more to do than to get some Alguazils, and go and seize on the assassin, and bring him to justice."

" True," replied Ovieda ; " but where will you go to look for him ?"

" Where but at his own house ?" replied Alvarez.

Ovieda smiled. " Tut, tut, Signor," said he, " no man will wait while the halter came to him. Brazio is too good a judge to remain home until the officers go to fetch him."

" Where then must I seek him ?" inquired Alvarez.

" Wherever you please," replied Ovieda, with a sarcastic grin ; " but when you can pay liberally for the information, send for me, and I may tell you." So saying Ovieda quitted Alvarez. He was enraged at his obstinacy, and from that moment resolved to compass his destruction. He, therefore, returned to practise on the credulity of Brazio. Juan had died within a few minutes after he had been shot, without uttering a sentence ; but Ovieda kept that a secret from Brazio, in order to suit his own purposes. " Bad news," exclaimed he, as he entered the apartment where Brazio was anxiously waiting his arrival, " Juan still lives, and has accused you of attempting his murder. The magistrates are at this moment taking his depositions, because the physicians declare he cannot survive four-and-twenty hours. You will not be safe here twelve hours longer : at nightfall, therefore, you must take

advantage of the darkness, and remove to a place of greater safety. But it will be necessary to have money; I have but little on shore. You had better, therefore, give me an authority to receive some before it is too late; for, in less than an hour, Alvarez, with the Alguazils, will go to take possession of your effects."

"He shall not survive that hour," exclaimed Brazio. He seized Ovieda's pistol, and rushed into the street, and, covering his face with his cloak, hastened towards his mansion, which he entered by the garden-door. He listened a moment. He heard the voice of Isidora: she was beseeching them not to take her from the house. He heard a voice in reply; the words were,—"Strive to forget the assassin Brazio, and become mine." It was the voice of Alvarez. Brazio instantly burst open the chamber-door. Alvarez was kneeling to Isidora, declaring his passion—an instant more, and he ceased to live. The ball from Brazio's pistol had entered his heart, and he fell lifeless. The report of the pistol alarmed the servants; Brazio, fearing even the presence of his own domestics, threw up the window, and, leaping into the garden, was instantly out of sight.

The father of Isidora had been informed of the mal-practices of Brazio, and had arrived at the mansion with a party of Alguazils, intending to seize him; but he was too late. Brazio was nowhere to be found.

Ovieda had never lost sight of the main chance, and, in the hurry and bustle, had managed to get into the house, and laid his hand upon whatever was valuable that he could hide under his cloak. He had managed to secure a casket of jewels, and two bags containing some thousands of piastres, with which he got clear off. He stopped to rest his load when he reached a sequestered part, thickly planted on each side. Suddenly he heard a rustling among the foliage behind him. A man darted forth: it was Brazio! Surprise possessed the features of both.

"Where the devil did you spring from?" inquired Ovieda.

Brazio, agitated, exclaimed—"I have been obliged to fly from my own house; it is filled with enemies. What am I now?—a proscribed murderer. My property seized;

my estate confiscated, and a price set on my head. What land will now give me shelter?"

"No land at all," rejoined Ovieda. "You must give up your *land* freaks, and take to the *water*. Its better to run the chance of being *drowned* than being *hanged*. You are not quite a beggar yet, however; but you may thank my intrepidity for that. Look! here is a casket of jewels worth more than a trifle; here's a couple of bags of piastres, and cursed heavy I found them, too; and here are some bank papers, made payable to you,—wanting nothing but your signature. They are good in any part of Spain, therefore we must give them a good spread of canvass, and get them passed at some distant port before the news of your disaster gets known abroad. I've a devilish clever fellow aboard that does our exchange business."

Brazio listened to Ovieda with a vacant stare, and hardly seemed to notice what he said, for the events of the last two days had confounded him.

"Come, friend Brazio," continued Ovieda, "night is drawing on, and I must get aboord soon: so make up your mind. You are no longer safe in Spain; matters are now too bad to be worse, therefore cheer up, and make the best of a bad bargain. I am master of as fine a little vessel as ever doubled the coast of Spain. Come with me: your fortune shall be mine. We'll join partnership. Give me your gold, and you keep the money that shall be paid for your bank bills. That's fair and even on both sides. Come on board with me, and you shall live a free and merry life; and if you don't like our ways, why you can return on shore to be hanged, if you prefer it."

Brazio raised his clenched hand, and emphatically vowed eternal enmity to his fellow-men.

"There's my hand upon it," exclaimed he, as he grasped Ovieda's out-stretched hand. "I am yours: do with me as you will."

"That's well spoken," said Ovieda. "Now give me a helping hand with these bags. Our boat lies just behind yon rock, not half a mile hence: we'll soon be on board our little vessel. You can just see the tops of her masts peeping over that promontory, as much as to say,

—‘Come along ; I’m waiting for you.’ The moon will be up in two hours, and as darkness is more convenient for my business, I shall take the liberty of leaving *terra firma* a couple of leagues astern of us before the moon is up.”

They lifted up the bags of gold and jewels, entered the boat, and were soon on board the vessel. They weighed anchor instantly, and, when they had sailed about two leagues from the shore, Brazio beheld several additions to the crew, which appeared to consist of all nations, and when Ovieda came on deck after a short absence, his dress was materially altered. He wore a large fur cap with a death’s head on its front, a huge cutlass and four pistols. All merchandise was lowered into the hold, and in their place appeared small carronades. The men also were busy in arming themselves. Mulattos—blacks—all seemed to form a commonwealth. Brazio seemed at a loss to guess the cause of this metamorphosis, when Ovieda, observing his surprise, thus accosted him :—

“ Friend Brazio,—for so I must now term you,—your surprise is but natural. You thought us a merchant or trading vessel. No such thing : we are a set of free fellows, and we don’t mind making free with any valuable cargo that falls in our way. We are pretty well known, for we have kicked up some brisk freaks among the merchant traders, and our name has got into vogue. You have, doubtless, heard of the daring pirate *Gonsalvo* ! Well, I am he ! Now you know the whole of the matter. If you don’t like to remain on board, we’ll put you ashore the first time we touch land. If you consent to remain, you shall rank equal with me.”

Brazio resolved to remain on board, and, abjuring all thoughts of ever rejoining society, made up his mind to live and die a pirate.

The British ship *Dauntless* left Falmouth, and was soon on the broad Atlantic. They crossed the Bay of Biscay with a good breeze off the land, the weather was mild, and the seamen found their work comparatively light.

One day, about two p. m., the man on the look-out gave

notice of a vessel ahead, under a press of canvass, and, from the description, the Captain supposed her to be the pirate Gonsalvo. She came boldly on with Spanish colours flying at her mast-head.

"If she is a pirate," exclaimed the Captain, "she has the impudence of the devil. Keep your ports closed; I think she mistakes us for a merchantman."

The strange sail approached, lowered her Spanish colours, and hoisted a red flag, with a sword and death's head. She was a capital sailer, and sailed completely round the British cruiser.

"Damn her impudence!" said the Captain. "Up with your ports and give her pepper."

But the pepper came too late. She flew before the wind as swift as an arrow, and the British lost her for that day.

"There," said Peter, "did you ever see such an evasive little devil as that in your life?"

"Why, as to that matter, Master Peter," replied Junk, "I don't exactly know the true bearing of that 'ere word *evasive*, as you calls it."

"Och, bother!" exclaimed Pat Larkins, "sure and every body knows what *evasive* means."

"Hush, hush!" interrupted Peter, don't let's have any more blunders. How can an Irishman explain a word as is only to be found in the most larned dictionaries?"

"And sure, Mister Peter, will you be asther telling me I don't know the meaning of *evasive*?" cried Pat. "Now messmates, only listen awhile, and I'll tell you how nately I handled that word *evasive*.

"We had just got all our new rigging complete, and our sails were all unbent, and we lay at anchor in the roads, and the Captain determined to sail next morning. Our beautiful new canvass looked so neat and clean from the shore, that boats full of fine gentlemen and ladies were coming on board every hour to see the ship. Och, and didn't I take care to hand the sweet creatures aboard genteelly? Och, sure, I was as busy as the devil in a high wind. Five o'clock came, and the Captain said he must have no more visitors aboard, else we should not be ready to sail in the morning, as it hindered the men from their work. And sure, as I looked towards the shore, I saw

another boat full of ladies coming off. So the Captain says to me, 'Paddy Larkins,' says he, 'if those ladies come alongside, and want to see the ship, you must give them an *evasive answer*, and get rid of them as well as you can; and I'll go down below and wait till they're gone.' And sure enough he went below, and then the boat full of ladies came alongside, and they ax'd for the Captain, and I gave them an evasive answer, and they went away with it a devilish deal quicker than they came, and the Captain popped up his head, and said—'Pat, are they gone?' 'Yes, they are, your Honour,' says I. 'What did they say?' says he. 'They ax'd for your Honour,' says I, 'but I gave them an evasive answer.' 'What did you tell them?' said the Captain. 'I said your Honour was gone.' 'Gone where?' says he. 'Gone to blazus,' says I, 'and you may go after him if you plaise.' Now, wasn't that an evasive answer, Mr. Peter?"

"Well," said Peter, "after that, I think, you may shut your mouth, for you'll never beat that as long as you live."

"Sail a head!" called a voice above.

The Captain took his glass. "It's the same vessel again!" said he "We'll try for her this time, boys. The breeze is steady, and getting pretty stiff. We shall get her within range presently."

The breeze increased to a gale. The Dauntless spread her canvass kindly to it, and she ran ten knots. The pirate was on a tack; but as soon as she went about, the Dauntless gave her a broadside, which made her rather groggy; but she picked up well. The Dauntless tacked and gave her another broadside. Her topmast went down, and there suddenly appeared great confusion on board of her. The Dauntless gained upon her. The pirate was disabled, and seemed to make no way.

"There's some mischief among them," said the Captain. And he was right, as the sequel will show.

The shot fired from the Dauntless had caused sad havoc. Ovieda had been mortally wounded. He was lifted on to a sail-cloth: he beckoned Brazio to approach, and bid the crew leave them a few moments.

"Friend Brazio," said he, "my time is come, and a short hour will close my career in this world. Our vessel

is crippled, and cannot escape from her pursuers. On either side death is certain. Yet I cannot bear the thoughts of my brave crew being strung up to the yard-arm like so many rabbits. You are a bold man, and have courted death like a hero since you have been on ship-board. It now remains for you to achieve but one more act of bravery to save us from disgrace. Hark ye ! our powder-magazine is well stored. Your hand may accomplish the deed, and the pirate's crew will die as they have lived,—like bold and desperate spirits."

Brazio grasped his hand. "By hell, I'll do it!" exclaimed he, as he grasped the lantern.

Another shot struck Ovieda, and his lifeless body rolled on the deck. The pirates, driven to desperation, flew to their guns once more. The British ship rapidly gained upon them. A vivid light was seen on board the pirate's ship. Brazio had kept his promise: he had set the ship on fire ! A cry of horror was heard among the lawless crew—a minute elapsed—a tremendous explosion took place: and, when the smoke cleared away, not a vestige remained of the pirate's vessel or his daring crew !

## A GAME AT COQUETRY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE REFORMER."

" WELL, Fred!"

" Well, Frank!"

These were the first salutations of two intimate friends, yclept Frederick Markham and Francis Lyttleton Winchester.

" Well, and how do?" lisped out the last-named gentleman. " How does it fit? How does the dose smell? How does your pulse beat? Have you got a palpitation of the heart? Does your head ache?"

" Psha! I did not send for my physician!"

" Physician? no! He takes the body, I the mind; which hath the better bargain? I inquired after the symptoms of your corporeal frame, that I might ascertain the state of the incorporeal. You, mundane that you are, carried your thoughts no higher than the acceleration or stupefaction of the sanguinary tides. I judged by the tides of the moon of your brains—by your brains of your heart—by your heart of the lady."

" Could you not have asked a straightforward question?"

" Of a third person, but not of the principals in a matrimonial affair. Why, a man warmly in love would have construed, or rather misconstrued, a question into a doubt, a doubt into an insult, an insult into a challenge, a challenge into a bullet, and a bullet—O, ye fates! into my heart, and all because of an indiscreet question. No, Fred, no; I am wiser than that. For want of a nail, the shoe was lost—for want of a shoe, the horse was lost—for want of a horse, the rider was lost, and all for want—no, Fred, no. I have just introduced a new mode for my

hair, which has taken; and, as it is in the first blush of the new fashion, I am not willing that a single curl should be shaken by a mistimed argument, though it should have all the weight of—lead."

"As ridiculous as ever!"

"I flatter myself a little more so—I am improving. Remember that there is no standing still, and I would not willingly retrograde. Besides, absurdity, or eccentricity, which is the same thing, is the very charm of life, which the world runs after most vehemently. People can choose whether they will care or not for such a wise, sterling, profound, serious, fellow as you; but they have no choice, they are irresistibly impelled to follow my folly, to rush after me through bog, over briar, till the *ignis fatuus* has led them—he himself knows not whither."

"Well, but wise, serious people, such as you are pleased to designate your poor friend, sometimes follow these will-o'-the-wisps quite as foolishly, and sometimes more foolishly, than they who with a light heart have also a light pair of heels to escape again."

"Ah!—and a sigh—suspicious Fred!"

"Was there ever a day in man's life when a sigh, perhaps breathed by memory, perhaps by anticipation, might not emanate from the heart?"

"These sighs are serious things. Come, I see I must resume my medical character. A sigh—that is, a lengthened inspiration of the breath, followed by a lengthened expiration—rather curious that a sort of difficulty in breathing should have any connexion with the delicate embarrassments of the heart."

"A lengthened inspiration!—what treason, Frank, thus to vulgarise the sentiment of a sigh."

"Oh! *we*, that is, *we men*, know the value of a sigh. I would not depreciate it for the world—but then it must be breathed into the ears of a lady. Sighs are thrown away upon me; mere trash, bombast, nonsense, folly."

"And mine?"

"It was forgetfulness—or you mistook me for your mistress."

"It was not forgetfulness, it was remembrance."

"Then must I renew my investigation. Now, look me

full in the face—there—gravely—that is grave enough—almost too gravely. Now answer all my interrogations."

" Well, I am nothing loath."

" Are you in disgrace with your mistress ?"

" No."

" Are you in favour ?"

" No."

" The medium ?"

" Yes."

" That is bad. You had better have had a quarrel. I would advise you to make it into a quarrel. It is much easier to pass from storm to sunshine, 'from Indus to the Pole,' than from indifferent dulness into grace and favour. Make a quarrel of it, Fred."

" How shall I manage it ?"

" What a question ! None but a dolt could have asked it. Tell her that her lapdog is an ugly bore."

" That would be true."

" Then you must not utter it. Be sure that, your anger you never, on any provocation, speak the truth. Be as bitter as you will. Be a very Brougham in satire—a very Wellington in ire; call your antagonist every vile and wretched thing on earth, only taking care to exceed or overleap the truth, and there need not exist the slightest obstacle to the renewal of the warmest friendship. But, oh ! once utter a truth, sterling and immutable, and you shall find that the anger it generates shall be as imperishable as truth itself. It is on this principle that men who vituperate to-day shake hands to-morrow. There has been nothing but clack, and clamour, and the brazen note of war, but not an arrow shot; the sounds die away in the air, and leave no festering wound."

" Then, must I leave the lapdog unassailed ?"

" It is a doubtful point; she might not identify the little tassel with herself, and then she might forgive: but, again, as the little cupid is, doubtless, a little love, and the selection of her own most seraphic taste, to vilify the one might be to impugn the other. Upon the whole, I think you had better intimate to her that she squints."

" That she squints !"

" Ay, I suppose at least that that is not veritable truth,

or else, oh ! for a lament on your taste ! That, therefore, she might forgive."

" But, suppose only for a moment that I would rather choose disgrace than favour—banishment than presence."

" That is difficult to suppose."

" And wherefore ?"

" Because Mr. Frederick Markham professes to be a man of principle and honour, consistent withal, and he is here on the point of marriage. The lady is ready, her friends are willing, settlements are made out, jewels bought, dresses selected, carriages in readiness, and the whole of the lady's five hundred dear friends waiting anxiously to congratulate her on the acquisition of a new name and a new appendage to it. And these are the smallest parts of the preparations ; a greater is that the bridegroom's *old, sage, and steady* schoolfellow and friend has had some extremely scientific garments cast to his Adonis mould, and has submitted to be whirled a hundred and so many miles, to the danger of his curls and the fatality of his cravat, to honour the august ceremony with his presence. And are not these reasons enough to forbid his supposing that the matrimonial *yea* could be converted into a *nay*, and that too through the versatility of his capricious friend ? Why, I tell you, Fred, that you have usurped my character ; caprice is all my own, and I shall resent the robbery."

" I know all that you would imply. I know that these changeful feelings are poor, pitiful, dishonourable ! It is only to your ear that I would breathe them, for you are most truly my *steady* friend. I tell you, Frank, that I loathe myself ! My boasted discernment is no better worth than the sight of the blind, or the wisdom of the idiot ! I, who prided myself on my solidity of character, and my just appreciation of the worth of others—I, who thought man could not deceive, nor woman delude me, have not only entangled myself, but committed the fatal folly of violating my own natural rights of liberty, of selling my birthright for a mess of pottage !"

" Order ! order, Fred !"

" Ay, it's folly, too rank. But, when I think that I am

in the toils of a heartless coquette, I may be permitted to rave a little in my net."

"Rave, by all means; you had better let the fit take its course till it shall have spent itself; you only protract by striving to suppress."

"I have done."

"Then that is the precise point at which I wish you to begin. Now, tell me how you, who were so orthodox a lover, have all at once become infected with this heresy."

"I will tell you. Simply because, when I had utterly committed myself, the lady took no further pains to support her fictitious character. She, who was once soft as sighing Eve, downcast, modest, diffident, now speaks with the loudest, boldest utterance. 'The eye that a month ago dared not meet mine now actually stares me out of countenance.'

"And so you fell in love with a lady because she shut her eyes, and you have now fallen out of love because she has opened them again!"

"Frank, I tell you plainly that on this subject I cannot bear raillery. I loved her, at least I thought that I loved her, because her beauty attracted me, and her apparent softness and sensibility ensnared me. I cannot tell you what pains I was at to subdue everything like ruggedness in myself in my approach to her, and how I strove to adapt my mind to the imagined image of her purity—and all the while she had a hackneyed heart and feelings, from which the blush and the brightness had all passed away, and she was scorning me for the very sanctity of my devotion!"

"Very pleasant, Fred, to a Quixotic sentimentalist like yourself. What excellent fools you men of sense make! I suppose after all this you are going to whistle her off."

"And be as much rogue as fool! I thought you had known me better."

"And so you sacrifice yourself, all that you are and all that you might have been, to a coquette?"

"No, I sacrifice myself to my own humour."

"For the sake of consistency."

"For the sake of honourable consistency."

"But, as you find that the lady you propose to marry

is not the same lady whom you proposed to marry, it seems to me the course of consistency is to escape from her. So doing, you would be true to your own tastes."

"True to my tastes, but false to my principles."

"So then you are resolved?"

"As man can be."

"Well, I wish you joy."

Mr. Francis Lyttleton Winchester walked to the window, lounged out of it, hummed an opera-tune, now and then glancing towards his friend with extreme *nonchalance*.

Much hurt and irritated, Markham hastily crossed the apartment to escape from the unkindness of his friend. The handle of the door was in his hand, when Winchester turned carelessly round and said, "Hark ye, Fred."

"Well."

"Is Miss Linley really handsome? Would a flirtation with her disgrace a man of taste?"

Markham indignantly clapped the door.

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How is life spent? let us see—it divides itself—two quarters in sleeping, one in dressing, and one in eating and drinking. Of the two last mentioned occupations Letitia Linley had completed the one, and was waiting to commence the other.

"Pray, Mr. Markham," said the lady, "how soon may we expect to be honoured with the company of your friend?"

"I am expecting him momentarily."

"It would be a great pity were he hurried in his toilet. I think he has not been arrived more than three hours."

Markham coloured and looked mortified.

"He is not particularly anxious to make the acquaintance of your new friends," added Letitia, with an air of pique; "but profoundly wise people, like yourself and your friend, Mr. Markham, are, of course, far exalted above a vulgar curiosity."

Another nervous twinge passed across Markham's face. "Mr. Lyttleton Winchester," he said, "is in nothing like

me. I should compliment him little in admitting the resemblance."

"Well, I am pleased to find that a gentleman's toilet involves a more elaborate operation than a lady's. The picture wants more last touches, more finish. We would not for the world see Mr. Lyttleton Winchester to a disadvantage, because, being your friend, we expect to find in him the very quintessence of perfection. So, Morrison," said the lady to a servant who entered to announce dinner, "let Mr. Lyttleton Winchester be told that our dinner waits his presence, but that I particularly entreat that he may not too much hasten his toilet after his fatigue in travelling."

Markham crimsoned at the mock-courtesy of this speech; his friend had travelled but fifteen miles that morning.

He heard the reply with wonder. "Mr. Lyttleton Winchester thanked Miss Linley, and would avail himself of her kindness for another half hour."

Miss Linley coloured with indignation: her malice reverted on herself. That half hour was made up of the longest minutes ever known in chronology. At its close, Lyttleton Winchester lounged into the room. The haughty frown with which Miss Linley had prepared to annihilate him fell innocuous: he lifted his glass at her, met the anger of her eye with a slight shrug of the shoulders and a still slighter smile, and dropped behind, as the lady, assuming her full height of stature, gave her hand to Markham and walked out of the room.

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It was excessively provoking, but it was apparent to all Miss Linley's dear friends, that Mr. Francis Lyttleton Winchester was ice and adamant to all her charms.

"How astonishing!" said the dearest of her dear friends; "how truly astonishing! It is the first time I ever knew you, my dear Letitia, *fail in society*."

Miss Linley was resolved that she would not *fail in society*; and, having found that frowns fell as futile as on the impassive ice the lightning plays, she resolved to try whether sunshine might not melt. And Mr. Francis Lyttleton Winchester, the most superlative of beaux, the most

exquisite of fops, suffered himself to be beguiled into a conversation.

"Do you patronise the fine arts?" asked the lady.

"Yes," Winchester replied, "I sometimes practise them myself."

"Indeed!—in what mode?"

Winchester looked archly.

"Ah! do you allow yourself so artful? But I meant such an art as this." It was a miniature.

"Yes, I like portraits of the distinguished."

"And none other? Not of women?" and Miss Linley tried to smile away the homeliness of the question.

"I have portraits of my favourite horses. They make better pictures than women. There is grace, symmetry, beauty."

"Better pictures than women! Ingrate!"

"I like women only when they have a smile on their lips, and I should grow tired of a smile that sat simpering for ever there."

"Then you love the sunshine of smiles?"

"Yes, when they beam only on me; or, to speak more properly, I would myself be the sun, and the dial should answer only to my gaze. To me it should give an instant response; to every other ken be but a blank tablet. Now, the lips of a portrait must smile on all who looked upon it, and I should be jealous that other eyes should share with me."

"Then you would not tolerate a portrait that always smiled?"

"No, because it would smile on others as well as upon me—as you will do on Markham, as he is now passing."

The lady turned away her smile, and a frown gathered on her brow and let its shadow fall on Markham, as he passed seriously and melancholy on.

"Do you let him pass?" said Winchester, "without a word, without a look, or at least such a one as he had been more at peace without?"

"Let him pass as he will, as he may," said Letitia, disdainfully.

"Markham!" instantly exclaimed his friend, "Miss Linley is anxious to hear the sound of your voice."

Miss Linley cast an angry, a natural, frown upon him, which had no other effect than to force him into a gaiety which displayed to admiration the whitest of white teeth. "Nay," he said, "if you frown, I fly. Women are only tolerable while they are good-tempered. Markham, Miss Linley wished to show you a pretty picture—pretty, because like herself."

"I scarcely know whether you mean to be complimentary or censorious."

"Either would be too much trouble."

There was a contest in the mind of the lady, but it ended in a laugh. "You are *so* mirthful!"

Had *I* uttered one tithe of that impertinence, would it have been mirth in me? asked Markham of himself. He plays the fool well—and can this exquisite folly please her shallow mind?

"Then you will not criticise my portrait?" asked Miss Linley, as she smiled upon Winchester, and turned her back on Markham.

"Oh yes, if it will oblige you."

"I long to hear its faults."

"To begin with the eyes: they are fine, but they want softness—let me look into those of the original, and try to find in their orbits the sensibility which should have beamed upon me here. Ah, false painter, there sleeps beneath those shadowing curtains a light that might have blinded your own dim vision, had you but had the power of kindling it to flame!"

Markham listened in astonishment.

"The hair—whose taste was that?"

"Mine," said Markham. "A month ago, Miss Linley allowed me a voice—as she now does you. It is after a pure model of the antique."

"And might do for an antiquary, but not for Miss Linley. Bad, bad, very bad! There wants a revolution in women's heads."

"The inside or the out?" quietly asked Markham.

"Both, equally. The outside is bad taste, the inside bad understanding."

"You are too complimentary," said Miss Linley, piqued.

"Now do be offended, and do not be the exception."  
"I will, to disappoint you; so proceed with your critique."

"Well—hair bad; eyes middling; complexion good, only too positive; not a hue but seems every moment going to change, although we know it cannot change; attitude too firm, too unbending, not seeming ready to shrink from my gaze, but too fixed and soldier-like; dress does not fit, and too many ornaments over the whole."

"Shall I bear this!" exclaimed Miss Linley.

"Just as you please; but, if you are so good as to bear this, you will bear a little more. The lips—I would say they were pretty, if they smiled upon me."

The living lips, "celestial rosy red," expanded as he spoke.

Shall I bear this! internally exclaimed Markham, as, indignantly excited, he passed on.

"But, Markham—" Markham would not hear: he was gone.

"Markham," repeated Winchester, "what an exertion it requires to pronounce that name! I shall advise him to get an act of parliament to change it, for I am sure it must have a most rugged and offensive sound in polite ears. What woman of taste could endure to be designated by such a title, *Mistress Markham!* No human being could ever imagine beauty and elegance under such an epithet, *Mistress Markham*—fah! what a sound!"

Winchester took his elegantly wrought card-case from his pocket, and, drawing out two of its highly satin'd and elaborately ornamented cards, wrote on the back of one *Mistress Markham*. On the face of the other was inscribed his own grandiloquent patronymic, *Mr. Francis Lyttleton Winchester*; to the prefix of which he added the soft serpentine letter *s*.

He laid them before Miss Linley. "Which, think you, is the prettiest?"

Miss Linley had the grace to blush as she restored to him his own designation, and, taking the card which seemed the representative of her own slighted swain, tore it into atoms.

Markham was impatiently pacing backward and forward in his apartment, with a lowering brow and perturbed aspect, as Winchester entered.

Winchester passed his hands through his hair, and adjusted his cravat at the glass.

Markham stood frowning by. "When you have entirely finished your arrangements, I should be glad to be allowed to inquire the motive of your present conduct—if any motive you have beyond the indulgence of a heartless levity."

"Have you any other question to ask?—because it will be less trouble to answer all your interrogations at once."

"It is folly to ask questions when we know that replies cannot be given. I have only to express my regret that you should have taken the trouble of this journey, just to prove to me that there are male coquettes as well as female."

"Anything further?"

"Nothing but that you are——."

"Stay, Fred, stay, else you may say something which I ought not to forgive. Well, I am resolved that I never will have another sensible friend; they are all such impervious-headed fools. Why, you are more easily deceived than a woman! Cannot even see with your eyes open?"

"I see only that you are encouraging the evil qualities of a woman who is doomed to be my wife, and exposing her to the ridicule of the world."

"I am only playing at coquetry with an adept in the game."

"And confirming my wife in its practice even before my eyes!"

"No, Fred, she will never be your wife. She has done me the honour of sending by me her dismissal of your honourable self."

A strange mixture of feelings overspread the countenance of Markham, as he received Miss Linley's billet. Was it possible that so serious a circumstance could have been settled between his mistress and his friend with such an unseemly levity? But it was even so. Miss Linley

had thought further on their engagement, and, being convinced that it would not promote their mutual happiness, she apologised, as she would have done for not attending a party, for being obliged to relinquish her engagement..

" Is it possible ! " exclaimed Markham : " and how, Frank, did you obtain this ? "

" Oh ! you think too seriously of these things," replied his friend : " matrimony is not of half the importance that you imagine. A mere nothing, believe me."

" You fill me with wonder at your easy and rapid influence ; and with amazement how you could obtain it over her imperious mind."

" Oh, on principle. I do every thing on principle. Always take it as a rule, Fred, that, *where you find a tyrant, you have there the true materials for a slave.* This has been the principle of my conduct towards Miss Linley. I found in you a slave, in her a tyrant : it was easy to assume the one, and to reduce her to the other. Receive this as a maxim, my dear fellow, and it will be useful to you through life ; I always act upon it."

" But this letter ! how was it obtained ? "

" Oh, without trouble. You know I hate trouble. I would not sit by Letitia's side at dinner, because she was engaged to you."

" Is it possible ! "

" Very possible : so she was piqued, and told me that she was still a free agent, and would never be a slave to any man. I laughed, sang, and replied that I never paid any attention to married women, because they were all *passées*, gone by, and that I was going to find out whether the little girl with blue eyes at the bottom of the table was worth any words. She rolled her black eyes spitefully at me, and told me that she would prove that she was free, and, taking a pencil and the envelope of a letter, which was in her reticule, she hastily scribbled your dismissal, which she gave me with one hand, as I took the other and led her to the dinner-table."

" And into this woman's hands I was committing the happiness of my life ! "

" One of the wise things that sensible men sometimes do."

Markham sat with his face buried in his hands and his elbows leaning on the table. What a strange mixture of feelings swelled his heart! Among those feelings, mortified self-love took the place of wounded affection. This, then, was the end of all his sanguine dreams.

Winchester gave him ten minutes' time for self-recollection. At its close, he said, "Well, Fred, at what time shall I order our chaise!"

"Now! this moment! when you will!"

"It is late to-night, and I should not like us to go off like disappointed men. Let us breakfast here to-morrow, be as gay as May, and then show them a light pair of heels."

"Markham hesitated. "Shall I tell you freely what has been passing in my mind?"

"At once."

"It is this—that in freeing me you have entangled yourself."

Winchester burst into intemperate laughter; but he could not laugh away the impression from Markham's mind.

"What preposterous folly this is of your's! Bound to the wind! tied to the air!"

"No matter to what; we should be true to ourselves."

"I tell you what, Fred, you will drive me out of all patience with your sickly sensibility. Are you not content with your own escape, but you must now involve me?"

"Your honour is as dear to me as my own. It will be said that you excited expectations in Miss Linley merely to serve a temporary purpose; that the moment that purpose was accomplished you fled. It is just the point on which a brother would send you a challenge."

"Has she a brother?"

"No."

"Well, then, since you cannot misconstrue my motive, I will stay long enough to prove to all Miss Linley's dear friends, and all whom it may concern, that I am in disgrace, and that she is not deserted, and I think I am very generous in humouuring you so far. Let me see; how long will suffice for that? Till to-morrow morning;

yes, I think I can contrive to get into pretty deep discredit before to-morrow noon; so I shall order the chaise at twelve. We will go a stage or two, and dine on the road."

The two gentlemen went to the ladies and green tea.

Miss Linley seemed to think that she had a claim of gratitude on Winchester, which he was bound to pay. It was with astonishment that she saw him throw himself into the seat most distant from her.

Miss Linley beckoned, but Winchester was blind; she spoke, but he was deaf.

At length she sent a child, a little pet cousin, to summon him to her side.

"My little love," said Winchester, "I am going to sleep, and I promise that I will dream of you."

The little love carried back the answer, and in a moment more Miss Linley tripped across the room.

"Since you will not come to me, I must come to you;" and she took the lower end of Winchester's couch.

Has my principle no limits? thought Winchester.

"But you are melancholy?" said the lady.

"No, only dull. Is not dulness the greatest insult that can be offered to our friends?"

"Dull! and in my presence!"

"Pardon me, I had forgotten it."

"Forgotten!" Miss Linley looked indignant.

"Pray forgive me, but the fact is that I am hungry for sleep."

"I will leave you to indulge the inclination." Miss Linley rose angrily.

"Thank you. You are very good." And Winchester occupied her vacated seat with his own outstretched limbs, and arranged his person in the most elegant attitude for slumber.

How Sir Charles Grandison would have been shocked!

The lady flounced away. The gentleman did not sleep, but he thought, surely I must have reached the boundary line of her patience; will it be possible for her to forgive as far as this? Is she so fitted for a slave that I cannot find the point of impertinence which might make her as-

sert her freedom? But the greater the tyrant the greater the slave.

Half an hour afterwards Miss Linley passed him. She held out her hand and said, "Come, I will be the first to forgive."

"I did not know," said Winchester, "that I had been so unfortunate as to offend you."

"You did not," she answered.

"Then why talk of forgiveness?"

"Forgive me," she said, "for the inadvertent word. We are making up a quadrille."

Winchester would not understand the innuendo.

"You must like dancing," she said, "it must so well accord with your cheerful temper. For myself, it is my passion."

"It is too boisterous an amusement for me," he replied, "and only fit for milk-maids and May queens."

Again the colour flushed Miss Linley's cheek, and she moved on, but in another moment looked back and said, "Then you will not be a volunteer?"

"No, nor impressed," was the reply, and Miss Linley passed on in renewed spleen.

Now, will she dance with the first fellow that asks her, thought Winchester. He was mistaken—Miss Linley did not dance at all.

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It was morning and the breakfast hour, the most pleasant in the twenty-four, before the day is old enough to bring us offence and fatigue.

Who could display ill-temper at a breakfast-table? Not Miss Linley, but Winchester.

The expression of the countenance was enough; but Winchester soon found occasion to put the sentiment into words.

A lady present complimented Miss Linley on the becoming tint of her apparel, the colour of the rose.

"Do you know," she said, smilingly, "that I never value compliments from my own sex."

"I never pay compliments," said Winchester. "In the first place, it is far too much trouble; and in the second, they are received but as debts paid on compulsion."

I would as soon see a bailiff as a beauty ; they are both equally duns."

Miss Linley's dear friend laughed, and said, with a great effort to look good-tempered, "That is both a rough compliment and a smooth one, but it is all Miss Linley's : she is the only beauty here."

"It seems that we are playing at the game," observed Markham. "The second pair of compliments is almost as good as the first."

"And neither of them are mine," said Miss Linley ; "they were appropriated to beauty, not to me."

It may be seen that Miss Linley had grown humble as Winchester increased in arrogance ; the natural consequence of his *principle*.

"But, pink is such a sweet colour," said the dear friend.

"It is too gaudy," said Winchester ; "it tires the eye, and fatigues the imagination."

"But it harmonizes so sweetly with fair delicate complexions—"

"I do not like fair delicate complexions, they are tiresome."

"And is a lovely contrast to blue eyes."

"I never look at blue eyes," replied Winchester.

"You must be blind yourself," added the lady with another good-tempered laugh, "or you would have seen that Miss Linley has not only a blooming dress, but a complexion of the lily, and violet eyes."

"I beg her pardon," said Winchester ; "she must forgive me, for I had forgotten all about it. Besides, a man cannot help his tastes."

Miss Linley rose and left the table with an air of inexpressible mortification.

"Too bad !" cried Markham, "too cruel ! to find fault not only with her dress, but with her person !"

"I think I may order the chaise a couple of hours earlier. Half-measures are of no use. You know I do every thing on principle."

The next glimpse which the friends had of the lady was conclusive : she had changed her dress.

Markham was greatly irritated. "Is it for such a wo-

man as this—,” he exclaimed, “ and this slave of yours was my *tyrant* !”

Winchester was involuntarily flattered. “ Positively, Markham, I am in danger. There is no resisting such condescension. I could find in my heart to make a fool of myself, after all.”

“ At what time shall *I* order the chaise ?” asked Markham, a little pointedly.

“ It must be evening now,” Winchester replied. “ I thought that I had reached the boundary-line of Miss Linley’s capacity to submit, but I find myself mistaken. My principle has proved so true that I must now take up the contrary position. I know that it cannot fail me, so I go to put it to the proof.”

On the same principle, though reversed, Winchester acted. He became himself the slave, that Miss Linley might again resume the tyrant.

The lady was fairly intoxicated with her triumph. She believed that she had conquered.

As to Winchester, he had assumed a far more difficult part than that which he had abandoned. There was a natural impertinence about him, which he found it difficult to restrain, but he succeeded.

The coquette was again the tyrant. She smiled and frowned; pouted and fretted; was silent or loquacious, to the full measure of her heart’s content; and Winchester followed her about like a lamb in a silken string.

Even Markham was deceived. “ I shall go without you, Winchester; I do not envy you your position, but I cannot bear to stay and see it.”

“ I told you,” was the reply, “ that you might order the chaise at eight.”

It wanted but a quarter to the hour. Winchester was lounging at Miss Linley’s side; he looked at his watch.

“ Why ?” she asked, “ are you making an arithmetic of minutes ?”

“ No ; I was thinking of the Ides of March.”

“ Have they come ?”

“ Come, but not gone.”

“ I do not understand you.”

“ No, nor I you.”

"What is there doubtful?"

"You have spent five minutes without speaking to me."

"Is that unpardonable?"

"Wholly, unless you tell me that you spent them in thinking of me."

"I was thinking only of my flowers."

Winchester took an exotic bouquet from her hand, and tore the beautiful flowers into atoms.

"Barbarian!" exclaimed the lady, half angry, half flattered.

"You have heaped up unkindness upon me within the last hour."

"I am not bound to be always smiling. Besides, remember that you told me you should grow tired of a perpetual smile."

"Well, I acknowledge that there is kindness in remembering my sentiments and acting upon them. So you frowned to please me; it was a delicate compliment."

"No; if I frowned at all, it would be to please myself."

"And my feelings?"

"Are in your keeping."

"Are they not beyond it?" and Winchester tried to look tenderly.

"At all events, that is your affair, not mine."

"I said you were unkind."

"You are difficult to please. Neither words nor silence give you satisfaction."

"The silence should be filled with kind thoughts; the words with kind meanings."

"Certainly; but, why for you?"

"You promised me not to speak to Markham to-night."

"Unless I were tired of you."

"Would you kill me with such a supposition?"

"I should like to see whether the certainty would kill you."

"But, your promise?"

"Was conditional."

"And the condition?"

" Null and void." The coquette could not resist the opportunity of exercising her power.

" I am serious !"

" So am I, and, to prove it—" Miss Linley beckoned to Markham.

" If you speak to him, I leave you."

" Do you threaten me?"

" No, but myself—and for ever!"

" Well, good-bye."

Markham approached. Miss Linley smiled sweetly upon him, such a smile as once brought him to her feet.

" Mr. Markham," said the lady, " I cannot endure to see you looking so painfully grave, especially," and she looked modestly down, " while I reproach myself with being the unworthy cause. This is a more commodious seat than the one which you have quitted : will you not take it?"

Markham's face was an index of wounded feeling. " Madam," he said, " it is better that I should leave your presence altogether, for, I confess that in it I cannot either look or feel otherwise than pained and sorrowful. I forgive you," he added, in real emotion, " I forgive you the agony of spirit which what has been play to you has caused me, and I earnestly hope that the feelings of an honest man may never again be within your power."

" And good-bye," Winchester added, " good-bye, and, as I threatened you, for ever. I say nothing of my feelings ; for, if there can be sympathy where there are no feelings, I must sympathize with you, for I have none. As to affairs of the heart, they are all milk and water, and fit only for boarding-school misses. You will not regret me, because I am only the shadow. Markham was the substance. Adieu ! adieu !"

Markham bowed profoundly, and walked sorrowfully away ; Winchester retired backward, with an impudent reverence, as from the presence of majesty.

Miss Linley sank on her sofa almost annihilated. Who can tell what an echo her heart gave back to the sound of their chariot-wheels !

## IRELAND PICTURESQUE AND ROMANTIC.

BY LEITCH RITCHIE, ESQ.

Change in Dublin Society—Carriages—Gentry—Moral Comparison with the English—Irish Vanity—Origin of Irish Impudence—Portrait of the Irish Gentleman—Of the Irish Gentleman—Of the Irish Lady—Of the Irish Leedy.

DUBLIN may be considered a modern city, since it was not till the reign of James I. that brick or stone was used for private houses. In the year 1790, according to Watson's Almanack, ninety-six Irish peers had town houses in Dublin; and this was the case also with almost all the members of the House of Commons, whose incomes were averaged by Grattan at four thousand pounds a year each. At present, there are only seven or eight resident peers, most of them prelates; and the incomes of the resident gentry might be fairly averaged at a very few hundreds.\*

It would be out of place to discuss here the question of the effect of this change upon the trade of the city; but a little speculation may be permitted upon its influence on the manners of the inhabitants. It seems to me that the gentry of Dublin are too small and unimportant a body to present that almost impassable barrier of caste which they do elsewhere. The attempts at encroachment by the lower ranks are constant, because they are successful; and, with a still greater affectation of what is called gentility than in other large towns, we find here a very extraordinary degree of republicanism in the constitution of society.

\* An intelligent correspondent of the Dublin Penny Journal—a work which does honour to Dublin and to Ireland—says, £200, and estimates the loss to the city at half a million a year.

Some persons imagine that Lord Mulgrave is at the bottom of this mischief, as they term it; but in reality it existed long before his time, and all that should be attributed to him is the discovery which it did not require much sagacity to make, that the little court of the Viceroy was quite unable of itself to stem a tide that had already set in. There must be *upper classes* every where; and, on the withdrawal of those of Dublin, the next rank would insensibly take their place. A like change would go on through the whole mass of society, and a general struggle of castes would commence.

To "keep a carriage," which in general means a car, is no distinction, for almost every body does this. Some years ago, the inside car was the genteest, now it is the outside which is "the time of day." This is a machine, as every body knows, in which the company sit *dos a dos*, with a space between, resembling an open coffin, for luggage. Vehicles of this description answer the purpose also of hackney coaches, of which there are very few in Dublin; and there is also a still smaller public carriage, resembling a very little covered cart, with no aperture except a door, which is behind. A person who keeps a car goes in state to a party; the next in wealth appears in a hackney coach; the next on a hackney car; and I have seen ladies dressed like princesses coming out of the little covered cart.

Dress, however, is no more than carriage keeping a distinction. In a very small country town, which because it is very small shall be nameless, while wandering in a grove appertaining to the Castle, I met a young lady in an elegant and fashionable morning dress. A novel was in one hand, and a parasol in the other; and a serving maiden walked demurely behind, with her eyes fixed upon the ground. This was doubtless the lady of the land; and, for a moment, I hesitated whether or not I should make an apology for my intrusion, having "dropped in" without the ceremony of asking leave. She passed loftily on, however, absorbed in the fate of Lord Augustus and Lady Wilhelmina; and I did not presume to disturb the meditations even of her maid, in order to give that fair vision a local habitation and a name. But

this, as it fortunately happened, was of no consequence ; for in an hour after, I met her in one of the very few shops of the town, and had the honour of receiving from her own beautiful hands a pair of boot hose in exchange for one shilling and tenpence, or, as she more laconically expressed it, one and ten.

In Dublin, you may descend as far as you please in the scale of shopkeeping, or, indeed, of any ostensible business at all ; and you will find the same wish to do the genteel in dress and everything else. This, however, is only at the hours when the ladies of the family go abroad : at home they are as humbly clad as may be, and in the article of food are satisfied with what Londoners of the same class would turn away from with indignation. These ladies will tell you, and with perfect truth, that they went last evening to a party at Mr. Maloonies *in a carriage*, and they will add an anecdote of something which occurred to them as they were *taking their tay*. Here the possessive pronoun gives you to understand that they are accustomed to a luxury which in fact they taste only on very rare occasions indeed.

These are harmless peculiarities ; and better than harmless. The English in such things are more matter-of-fact people ; but they are so because they consider money the sovereign good, and the pursuit of it the most honourable of all employments. In Ireland, no man is despised merely because he is poor ; and, if an Irishman is vain, you will at least find nobody so merciful as he to the little vanities of his neighbours. The English are said to be a more *respectable* people than the Irish. The reason is, that their country is one vast bazaar, where the inhabitants are devoted to the acquisition of wealth by buying and selling, where the virtues are business habits, and the respectability a fortune, or the steady regular attempt to obtain it. The Irish, on the other hand, do not consider that they were sent into the world, like journeymen into a manufactory, for the purpose of producing as much as possible. With them life has other avocations, quite as important. They value money for the amount of pleasure it will bring ; and if they do sometimes snatch at the pleasure before they earn it, this is surely

not worse than the opposite folly of refusing to enjoy what really is earned.

The systems, when pursued in extreme, are both bad. In England, with a fair proportion of all the higher virtues, we find more sordid meanness, and contraction of mind, than anywhere else in the world. In Ireland, the opposite plan has as great a tendency to debase, although not in the same way, the national character. The poor, especially if they have a taste for pleasure, are never independent; and the word independence comprehends all the virtues. But, if the London shopkeeper, who has realized a fortune, and yet stands at his desk from morning till night, imagine that I mean independence like his, he is grossly mistaken. He independent! He is no more so than if he were nailed by the ear to his own counter like a base shilling.

Irish vanity is not a cold, hard, selfish feeling. It is willing to live and let live. It does not raise itself up at the expense of others, and stand aloof, with eyes half shut, and the corners of the mouth dropped, scowling a smile at Inferiority. The ladies before-mentioned, who talk of "taking their tay," do so boldly without the risk of a sneer. If as much tolerance were exhibited in matters of religion as of vanity, Ireland would be almost happy in the midst of starvation. The cause of the tolerance is, that the vanity is not of an exclusive nature. A Scot prides himself on his ancestry, on his education, on his estate, on something that is *his*: an Irishman exalts himself through his friends and acquaintances. They are all persons of fortune, or fame, or honour; they keep a carriage, they give elegant parties; if women, they are beautiful or fashionable; if men, brave, or at least a good shot. The geese in Ireland are all swans.

Now, unhappily, this conventional tolerance does not extend beyond "that part of the United Kingdom called Ireland." Beyond the geographical limit, the habitual exaggeration of vanity is termed falsehood; and the cool, easy, self-assured manner of the narrator, is stigmatized as impudence. An Irishman feels at home every where, precisely because he was brought up to this feeling; and the Englishman, who is never at home but when his legs

are under his own mahogany, stares at him like a bullock, and wonders what the forward fellow means.

But it will be considered that I am now speaking of the Irishman of the stage, and of the novel; or, in other words, of that part of the Irish character which attracts most our attention, because it goes most against the grain of our prejudices. There is, in reality, as much diversity of character in Ireland as in England; and I shall now endeavour to lay down a few of the shades that are broadest and deepest. I do not here talk of the Irish and the Anglo-Irish; for that distinction I hold to have been long ago obliterated. I talk of the average Irishman; and I pick him up from no province in particular, but from the whole island. And first—

#### THE IRISH GENTLEMAN.

This species is extremely rare; for it would be absurd to count as Irishmen the children of absentees, who are brought up to think of their country merely as the place whence their father draws his revenue. But the real Irish Gentleman, when found, is well worth the trouble you may have expended in finding him. He is not a mere walking gentleman. He is full of character; and is, in fact, a sort of highly refined extract of the Irishman. He is as polite as a Frenchman of the old school; but it is not the politeness of manner, but of heart: and this is the secret of his success with the ladies. He is cool and self-possessed, but not grave and apathetic, like the English Gentleman. The latter qualities are respectable in a Red Indian, for in him they are associated with ideas of majesty and endurance; but the stoicism with which Mr. Smith enters a drawing-room, and the heroic calmness with which he levels his opera-glass at the stage, are irresistibly ludicrous. They remind one of the tragic air of a monkey cracking nuts. However, Mr. Smith is satisfied with the admiration of American travellers (who ought to know something of the Indian character); and so the little master Smiths have nothing to fear from the strictures of a vulgarian like me.

It would be difficult for the Irish Gentleman to acquire

this apathy of manner. The laws of good breeding are only just sufficient to keep within reasonable bounds the natural elasticity of his temperament; and thus he hits unconsciously the precise point between gravity and sprightliness beyond which on one side is frivolity, and on the other dulness.

The Irish Gentleman is fond of his country, but he makes no parade of it. If a defender is wanted he is ready; but he has the good taste to feel that the condition in which Ireland has been so long placed, gives a man no warrant to say lightly, or flauntingly, "I am an Irishman." Out of Ireland his pleasurable associations are all connected with the continent. It was there he received a part of his education; he speaks French like a native; he is a cousin of that foreign Irisher, the well known Count Devilskimbo O'Shaughnessy. He is partial to claret, not because it is foreign, but because it was the favourite drink of his ancestors, in those golden days, when claret was the only wine they could afford to drink. He no longer indulges to excess; or if he does so, on any extraordinary occasion, he carries his wine better than formerly, and eschews a row. When he quarrels, it is in cold blood, and in a gentlemanly way; but being a man of courage, and a good shot, this is not half so often as people imagine.

The Irish Gentlemen will by and by become more common in Ireland. At present many individuals of the species are scattered abroad upon the continent, serving in foreign armies, or otherwise incorporating themselves with foreign nations.

#### THE IRISH JONTELMAN.

The Irish Jonleman belongs to no station in particular, but is found in all classes, from the nobility downwards. His portrait has been painted by Miss Edgeworth and Lady Morgan; but the female pencil is too delicate in its touch to give features like his in their natural breadth and vulgarity. He has been exhibited also on the stage; but there a cloak of rude generosity is always thrown

round him, to conceal those defects without which there can be no likeness.

In Ireland, I have said, the vanity of one man is dovetailed into that of his neighbours, the result of which is an easy confidence of manner; but the Irish Jontleman stands out in bold relief from the plain surface of society. He is not vain, but impudent; and in this respect, he is the cause of half the prejudices which exist against his nation; for he thrusts himself forward as *the Irishman*. His brogue is more than Irish, for he cultivates it with great industry. He is not an exaggerator, but a liar; he is not gay, but boisterous; he is not convivial, but drunken.

He is a great duellist. You never enter his house but you find him cleaning his pistols, or hammering his flints. On the most careful calculation I have been able to make, there are three hundred and sixty-five duels per annum fought in all Ireland; and of these three hundred and sixty are fought by the Irish Jontleman. Notwithstanding this, he is never killed, or even wounded; the explanation of which is, that he always takes care to fight with a Jontleman like himself. The remaining five duels are fought by men of honour under the usual circumstances, and are frequently accommodated in the usual way. In Ireland, although the number of such conflicts is so immense as compared with England or Scotland, there is not a drop more blood expended.

The Irish Jontleman is a bully, and yet is not absolutely a coward. To serve a friend (that is to say, the person who hires him with money, or drink, or the loan of a horse, or the run of the larder), he will at any time run the risk of being kicked or horsewhipped. He is not a mere bully, however: he is also a flatterer, and a sycophant, and will fawn and crouch like a spaniel.

The Irish Jontleman stands in special awe of the Irish Gentleman. They are in every respect the opposites of each other; and for this reason you will seldom or never meet with them in the same company. The breed of the Irish Gentlemen, I have said, grows more common in Ireland; the consequence of which is, that the Irish Jontleman begins already to make himself scarce. A

change, besides, fatal to the latter, has taken place in the manners of society. At table there is more gaiety and less drunkenness, and people are now unwilling to put up with coarseness and vulgarity for the sake of a good song, or a humorous story. The ladies, too, finding the Gentleman, more comeatable, turn away from the other with disdain; so that by and by, instead of meeting him as heretofore in the best houses, you will have to inquire in the low taverns and whisky cabins, for the Irish Gentleman.

#### THE IRISH LADY.

The Irish Lady is the sister of the Irish Gentleman, and is one of the most fascinating women in the world. She has a lofty brow, fine eyes, and a face altogether more intellectual than that of the English Lady: but she has less dignity. In her manner she resembles more the French Lady, and is quite as amusing and conversible; but her coquetry has nothing of the heartlessness which confines the fascination of a French beauty to the moment when her eyes are fixed upon yours.

The Irish Lady has a touch of the enthusiasm of her country, which betrays itself in her whole character. She is either a rake or a devotee—for she scorns a medium. If a devotee, you will know her by a grave, not to say sad expression of countenance; and as this is not the true characteristic of devotional feeling, you perceive that she is struggling with the native archness of her disposition—which notwithstanding breaks out now and then in a sudden gleam from her deep bright eye. At such moments you turn a saint yourself, and acknowledge in its full power the beauty of holiness.

If a rake, her face is pale and haggard, for she rakes to excess. She takes to dissipation as men do to drinking. The idea of a quiet solitary evening is frightful to her imagination; she looks about for amusement with feverish anxiety, and bends down her spirit to the level of companions far inferior to that for which nature intended her. The intellectual powers, therefore, of the Irish Lady rarely receive fair play. In the country, more especially,

her mind labours under a want of books. Few families of any nation are wealthy enough to purchase or keep up a sufficing library, and there are only two or three towns in all Ireland in which there is a public one. I am far from denying, however, that there is a good proportion of well informed women in Ireland—but there ought to be more.

Instead of the national brogue, the Irish Lady has a certain *buoyancy of accent* which distinguishes her from all other women. This is the finer part of the Irish character manifested in sound. This accent gives point to the most common-place saying, and adds brilliancy to wit. To describe a thing so slight, so ethereal, is impossible; but any one who has enjoyed the conversation of an Irish lady of high rank in London, celebrated for her beauty and literary talents, must have felt what it is.

Even setting the Irish Lady, par excellence, out of the question, there is a great deal of character about female society in Ireland; and this is owing to the natural talent and liveliness of the people. We see there very little of the mawkishness which so often spreads over an English party; and are tempted more frequently to distinguish the individuals than satisfied to class them by that insipid, silly, no-meaning designation—*young ladies*.

#### THE IRISH LEEDY.

The Irish Leedy is of the same family as the Irish Jontleman, but is a much more amiable person. The grand object of her ambition is to pass for the Irish Lady; and this, while it shows much pretension, shows also much taste. She gets rid of her brogue by the rule of contrary: that is to say, instead of substituting, like her mother before her, the open sound of *a* for that of double *e*, she turns everything into double *e*. The word lady is with her leedy, and she will run after her sister Grace, calling, “Greasy, greasy!” Her accent, however, remains unaltered, notwithstanding this metamorphosis in her pronunciation, and the jumble is splendid! All her attempts to ladyfy herself are of the same nature; her

"vaulting ambition o'erleaps itself, and falls on the other side;" she is a lady by the rule of contrary.

Sometimes she tries to do the sentimental, but spoils all with a laugh, that bursts out of her eyes in light and water. Chiding the rudeness of her lover, she complains sighingly of her feminine weakness; but presently, falling into the sentiment of the old song, cries,

"Och, what the divvle are you at?—begone, you naughty man!"

and maybe hits him a slap on the face. She is much given to laughing, but is also an excellent weeper; and, by the same token, her *kit* consists chiefly of pocket-handkerchiefs. She is "fond of the army," and makes an excellent soldier's wife. In society she is nothing more than a vulgar Irishwoman ill dressed in fashionable clothes, boisterously sentimental, full of affection and high spirits, and with a touch of generosity in her nature withal which makes one sorry to laugh at her.

## BLACK DOG PRISON—THE SPECTRE PIG.

THE Black Dog Prison, which stood in Corn Market, has been removed in our own day; but the remembrance will long endure of a strange, not to say awful secret connected with it, of which the hero was a Black Pig.

The sentry was at his post one night, just under the condemned cell, whence a voice issued, calling him by his name.

"Mick!" said the voice; "Hist! Is it yourself, Mick?"

"Humph!" replied the sentry, angrily and disdainfully, as he turned away, and marched to the extent of the few paces allotted for his walk.

"Is it Mick that is after humphing," continued the voice piteously, "when a friend begs of him, on the bare knees of his spirit, for nothing more than a rope to hang himself with?"

"Sure you will get that in the morning," said the sentry roughly; "and that is no great stretch for your patience. But be easy now, you unfortunate creature, and in the name of the saints hold your tongue; for your voice comes upon me like a cold ramrod going down my back, and making me grow and shrink all over. A woman!—and she your sweetheart!"

"Don't speak of that now!"—cried the other hastily—"Sure, wasn't there enough said about it at the trial? I did the deed, and it cannot be undone. There is no use in talking to you about provocation, or hastiness of spirit, or the sudden voice of the tempter in my ear. She is dead, and there is an end; and whether by murder or manslaughter I care not. All I want now is to die myself."

"Wait, then," replied the sentry; "wait till the bless-

ed sun is in the heavens, and your fellow-men, ashamed of letting such a wretch be seen, will thrust you, with cries of execration, out of the world."

"It is that which I dread," said the prisoner, in a voice of terror: "To be drawn slowly through the streets in a cart! To stand alone among the multitude on Gallows Green, and to feel that every eye is fixed upon mine with hate, horror and disdain! What is death; what is hell itself to this? Blood for blood—is not that enough? Will you not be satisfied with my life? Will you turn me out into that dreadful crowd, where there is a separate and individual death in every glance of every eye, and so kill me ten thousand times instead of once?"

"Go, pray," said the sentry, in agitation; "go, pray; think of your guilt; wash your black spirit in her blood"—

"My curse upon your head, Mick Carolan!"—the prisoner almost screamed—"The curse of a dying man upon you and yours, for ever! If I had begged for escape; for a word of comfort; or a drop of water"—

"Hold!" cried the sentry, trembling—"For the love of the Saviour, do not curse me, Olocher!"

"I have! I do! And that same black spirit you have spurned shall haunt you every night of your miserable life!"

"Take it off; take it off, and I will obey you! There; there is a rope"—and he threw one up to the window, which the prisoner clutching eagerly drew in through the bars—"and now release me from your curse; and may the Lord have mercy on your guilty soul!" He looked up to the window, and listened for the word of relief; but, instead, a dull, heavy sound fell upon his ear; and then all was silent. The hair bristled upon Carolan's head as he gazed; for a black object swung behind the bars like the pendulum of a clock, and he knew that the prisoner had died, leaving the curse upon his head.

When Carolan was relieved from duty, he reeled homewards as if he had come from the whisky cabin rather than the sentry-box. On entering the open space called Hell, an adventure befell him at which he would

have laughed at any other time ; but, on the present occasion, it added greatly to the superstitious gloom which had fallen upon his spirit. A black pig ran between his legs, and threw him down ! The soldier, who would have marched up to an enemy's battery without flinching, lay, for several minutes, upon the ground, sweating and praying, and listening to the devilish cries of the animal, as it trotted up the street towards the prison. He at length reached his lodgings.

The next day a mighty multitude was assembled in Gallows Green, for the trial had excited universal interest. Many there were who had all along maintained that the unfortunate victim of the law had been guilty only of a hasty, thoughtless blow, which might be amply punished by a few weeks imprisonment ; and now that they were at the foot of the scaffold to witness his terrible fate, few seemed disposed to criticise this favourable view of the case. It was but yesterday the mob thirsted for the prisoner's blood ; and now that it was offered to them, they seemed to turn away with horror and compassion. Stories ran from mouth to mouth of his bravery, his generosity, his high sense of honour ; and even the women, against whose sex the outrage had been perpetrated, melted into tears as they told that he was one of the handsomest boys in the province of Leinster.

It may be conceived with what feelings Carolan, who was on duty keeping the ground, listened to all this. He was himself, indeed, in some degree, an object of public curiosity ; for it was remembered that the prisoner and he had been intimate friends, and his pale cheek, wandering eye, and disturbed manner, were interpreted as evidences of his guilt. A shout at length arose from the farther end of the Green. It resembled a shout of triumph ; and those near the scaffold broke into murmurs of indignation at the thoughtlessness of their fellow-citizens, in thus receiving what was, no doubt, the procession of the Condemned. The shout approached, however, echoed from lip to lip ; and, at length, the words resounded throughout the whole space—"A reprieve has arrived by express!"

A general rush was now made towards the prison, the troops in their quick march, almost confounded with the crowd. All were anxious to see the prisoner come forth again, a free man, into the world ; and, had it not been for a strong guard assembled round the door, it is thought that the sanctuary of the law itself would have been invaded. A very different spectacle, however, was presented to public curiosity. At the moment the multitude arrived, the jailer was delivering up to his friends the body of the suicide, stiff, stark, and discoloured ! It was observed by his comrades as a remarkable circumstance, that neither the news of the reprieve, nor the sight of the dead body, produced any change upon the pale cheek, wandering eye, and disturbed manner of Carolan.

In the conversation of the soldiers that day, and even of the citizens, there appeared a curious association of ideas. The self-murder took place about midnight ; about midnight the guard was relieved ; and, about midnight, Carolan, on his way home, was thrown down by a black pig. If you add to this the strange manner of the sentry, it will not appear surprising that a mysterious connexion appeared to exist throughout. The man who was that night to keep watch under the window of the condemned cell did not seem to like his duty. He looked at Carolan askance ; listened eagerly, yet without remark, to the story of the black pig ; and, at length, betook himself to his inevitable task with an expression of countenance which was afterwards remembered. When the guard was relieved, he was found lying upon the ground at his post, speechless and apparently dead. He had sustained a paralytic stroke, occasioned, as he declared, by an apparition in the form of a *black pig*.

On the next night, the guard was called out by the cries of the sentry—on the next—on the next ! The whole neighbourhood was alarmed. Soldiers and citizens avowed alike that the place was haunted, and the unholy shape was in every case the same—that of a black pig.

It will not be thought surprising that a prejudice—no one knew how or why—should have arisen among his

comrades against Carolan. This, at length, went so far that he was, to all intents and purposes, sent to Coventry.

"What I have done," said he to his young wife, "is no doubt a heavy crime; but it is a heavier misfortune. I cannot stay in the army, and I have no other trade. What is to become of us? Sure if it was the unfortunate creature's ghost who tumbled me down in Hell, it would have appeared to me afterwards, and not have employed itself, night after night, in frightening the innocent neighbours for nothing at all at all!"

"O, never mind you!" replied the wife: "whether in the army or not, we must live; and, as for the Black Pig, you have spoken too soon, my dear, for, my life upon it, you see him again!"

"Now, the Lord forbid!" said Carolan; "but what put that same into your head?"

"It was a dream I was after having last night"—But our story deals enough in the superstitious, and we shall leave out Mrs. Carolan's dream.

The next night the time had come round, and it was again Carolan's duty to stand sentry under the window of the condemned cell of the Black Dog Prison. When he went out of the guard-house for this purpose, all eyes were bent upon him in curiosity. It was debated, after he had gone, whether or not the guard should turn out in answer to his expected cries. No decision, however, was come to; but they sat up in arms the whole night. Once they heard something. It was when the bells of the city struck one; and the sound resembled a prodigious grunt, softened by distance till it became a hollow roar. But this was neither accompanied nor followed, by the sentry's voice; and even those who had voted for turning out, agreed in the propriety of sitting still. The time passed on, and still they received no summons! What could this mean? Of all living men, they had imagined that Carolan was the least likely to escape the supernatural visit; and, at the proper hour, the relief went their rounds, accompanied by a body of volunteers at least twenty times stronger.

The night was dark; but Carolan they could see was

at his post, standing as erect as a pike-staff, and they began the ceremony of changing guard with some trepidation. The sentry, however, did not answer.

"By the powers, he is dead!" cried they ; and they touched the stiff figure, which they found to be the musket of the unhappy man, with the bayonet fixed, and dressed cap-à-pié in the clothes of Carolan, even to his shirt ! There was no longer room for doubt. The grisly apparition was, in reality, the ghost of Dolocher, the felon who had committed suicide. It had carried off the sentry, body and soul ; and from that night it was known to the citizens of Dublin—who had long reason to know it well—by the name of the Dolocher.

The whole town was alarmed ; but the vengeance of the apparition, it seemed, was yet not slackened on poor Carolan. His widow went before the magistrates on the following day, and made an oath that she had met the Dolocher in Christ Church lane (a street leading from Hell), where it attacked, and attempted to bite her ; and that, in her terror, she had left her cloak entangled in its tusks. No sooner was her complaint done, than another, and another, and another woman came forward with a story of a similar kind. The alarm continued. Night after night some new outrage was perpetrated by the Dolocher ; and always his victim was of that sex which, in his mortal form, had brought him to misery and death.

The citizens were unjust—and no wonder—in their rage and terror, for they declared war to the knife against the whole race of pigs. A society was formed for the express purpose of exterminating them ; and, issuing at night from their meeting-house, a whisky shop in Cook Street, armed with weapons of all descriptions, they began the campaign with such energy that the kennels ran blood. Nor was the municipal government behind hand. They issued a proclamation calling upon every man to take care of his own pig, and commanded the bailiffs to go round at night with their pikes, and slaughter every individual of the swinish multitude that was found at liberty. This turned out to be a true benefit to the town, although not in the way that was expected ; for the streets

at that time were so infested with pigs that the nuisance had become intolerable. On the night in question the bailiffs did their duty zealously. Nothing was heard from one end of the city to the other but grunting, and squeaking, and squalling ; and before daylight they left the field of their prowess encumbered with slain.

The next morning, when carts were sent round to collect the dead bodies—not one was to be found ! The slaughter, however, had its use ; for although the Dolocher had not been destroyed, it was satiated with blood ; for it appeared no more again that winter.

The lonely widow of Carolan, in the mean time, was wooed by a blacksmith of a neighbouring village, and the man would take no denial. It was in vain for her to urge her grief for her husband's fate, and even to threaten him with the vengeance of the enemy of her house, the Dolocher. The blacksmith was enamoured ; and after every repulse he came again and again, for he had a good opinion of himself as well as of the widow, and could not conceive that any woman in her senses would refuse him seriously. Norah was bothered ; for the neighbours at last began to jeer her about the blacksmith—who was an unexceptionable match—and ask her whether she was keeping herself for the Black Pig ? This went on for a whole year, and the very memory of the above events had passed away, when all on a sudden, just as the winter had set in, the Dolocher re-appeared !

A young woman who was passing along the Wood Quay, was stopped at Fisher's Alley, and pulled into the shade by the brute, with whom she left her cloak and a bundle, as she fled in terror. This was the commencement of the campaign, and every night some new outrage—always committed on the beautiful sex—struck alarm into the breasts of the citizens of Dublin.

“ You see,” said Norah to the pertinacious blacksmith, “ you see this business is not at an end as you expected. Do you think, foolish man, the Dolocher would have more respect to the second husband than the first ? ”

“ Is it respect ? ” replied the blacksmith—“ Och, by my soul, it is I who will teach him that thing ! Only let

me get these two fists, one at each side of his head, and I'll make him wish himself between the hammer and the anvil. Did you ever hear of the cowardly beast laying hands on a *man*?"

"That is because his vengeance is vowed against *woman*. But if a *man* dared to offend him"—

"Then thunder and turf, I'll dare any how!"

"Is it daring you call it," said Norah, with spite, "to go round two miles from his beat? I never hear of *you* traversing Hell after bedtime—or Wood Quay—or"—

"Then by the powers, I'll go now."

"No; not to-night, for it is now too early. But to-morrow night, at the dead hour of twelve, pass the end of Fisher's Alley; and, turning your head, shout your summons to him as you go by."

"And what if I leather him outright?"

"If you do *not*, never come here again, or I will set all the women in the street to pin a dishclout to your coat tails!"

"But what if I do?"

"Then we'll talk about it," said the widow, with a smile and a sigh, as she hung down her head.

The blacksmith took his leave; but before returning to his village he called upon a friend, and then upon another, and another—always, of course, doing the civil thing with regard to the whisky bottle, till it was far in the night. By the powers, thought he, this is just the hour for the job! Won't to-night do as well as to-morrow?—ay, and better to boot; for to-morrow a smack upon Norah's lips, just in token of consent, will be sweeter than a dozen thwacks upon the skin of an old pig! It rained water-spouts as he was coming out of the last house, and his friend's wife insisted upon wrapping her cloak about him.

"Then give me the bonnet, too," said the blacksmith, who was just in the mood for fun, "and maybe the Pig will take me for one of his sweethearts!" He was accordingly accommodated with an old black beaver bonnet; and in this guise he set out upon the adventure.

The night was dark; the streets were deserted; and

nothing was heard but the heavy splash of the rain upon the stones. The blacksmith at first pushed lustily along, humming a brisk air, and slapping the walls with his hand as he passed ; but as the whisky lost its virtue by degrees in the cold night air, his spirits sunk to a pitch more consonant to the time and tide. He drew his bonnet over his face to keep the sharp drops from splashing in his eyes, and cowering up in his clo' might really have seemed, in the obscurity of the hour, to be a tall woman tramping homewards through the rain.

Just as he entered Hell, he heard all on a sudden a hideous grunt close to his ear, to which he responded, in the surprise and terror of the moment, like a echo, and it awaked the whole neighbourhood. Against the wall before he could raise the bonnet to clear it from his eyes, and felt the snout and tusk of a huge boar pig driven against his bosom.

" In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost !" cried the terrified blacksmith—" take that, ye ugly brute—and that—and that !" at every word darting his brawny fist into the chest of the Dolocher, with a force that might have felled a bullock. The phantom, accustomed only to encounters with the softer sex, and therefore wholly unprepared for such a reception as this, rolled heels over head upon the street ; when the blacksmith, leaping with his whole weight upon his breast, sent forth such shouts of victory as brought out the inhabitants, with lanterns and pokers, from far and near.

The groaning spectre was raised upon its hind legs, and the swinish tabernacle in which it had chosen to clothe itself, fell to the ground.

" Mick Carolan !" cried the crowd, and a dozen lanterns were thrust into his face. It was indeed Mick Carolan ! He was carried to the hospital of the Black Dog Prison ; where—truth compels me to relate—he died the next day. In his confession he detailed all that has been stated above ; adding that the idea of the imposture was suggested to him and his wife by the singular train of circumstances, with which at first he had nothing to do ; and that, having resolved to leave the army, he was under the

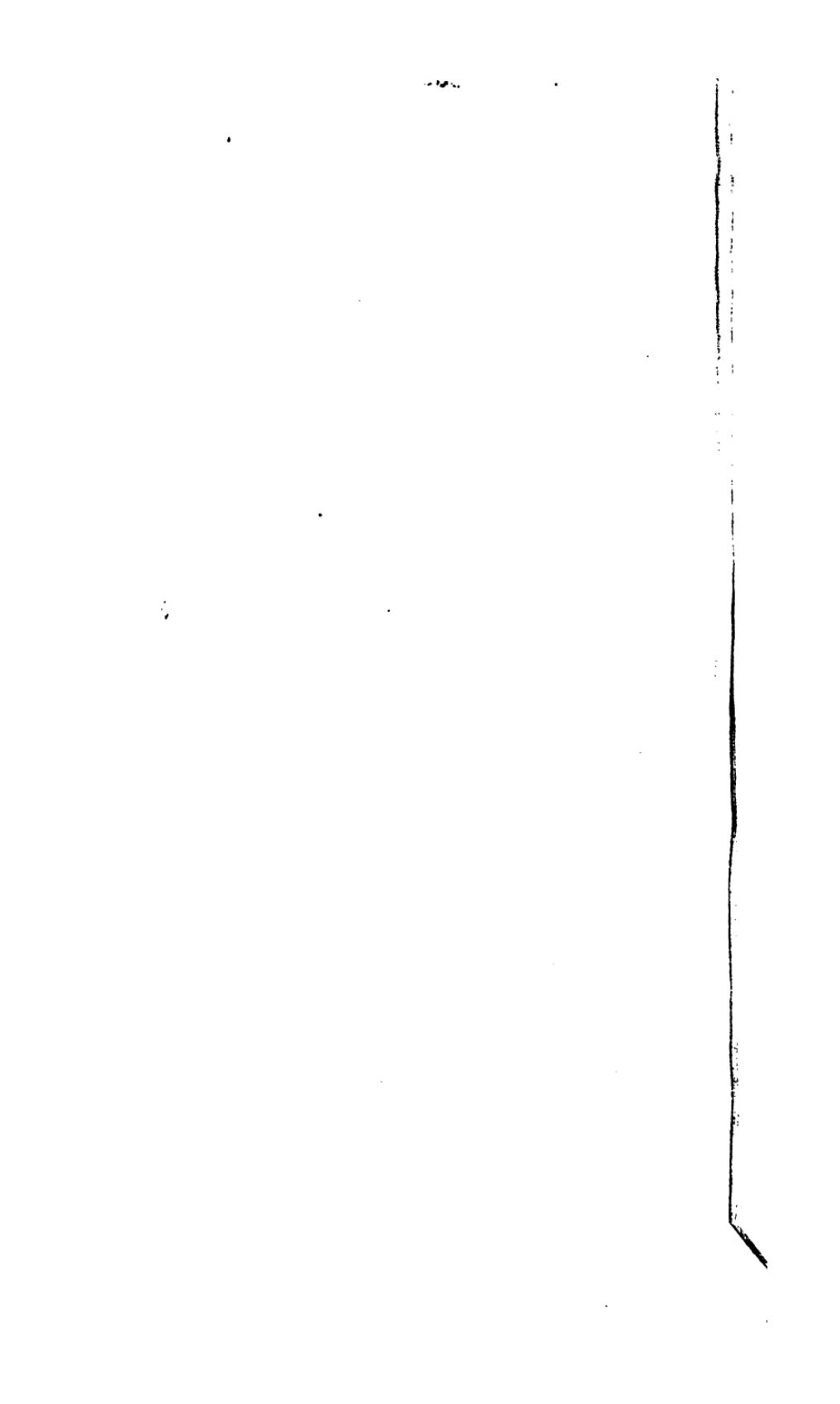
necessity of continuing the delusion as a means of support. The trifling robberies he committed from time to time upon women, were one means of raising the necessary supplies ; while so long as the slaughter of the pigs went on, and he was able to remove the carcasses to a cellar in Schoolhouse Lane, there was no want either of pork or bacon at his table.

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